



Acacia University

-School of Business-

Dissertation Guide

Updated Draft September 2025

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Introduction

This dissertation guide provides a framework to assist the learners along the doctoral program journey and through the dissertation phases. The guide is a supplement to the Doctoral Degree Program Catalog Student Handbook Addendum which includes program and course descriptions, admission and graduation requirements, the dissertation process, as well as dissertation committee roles and responsibilities. This important Student Handbook Addendum is vital reading for every doctoral student before reviewing the information in this Dissertation Guide. The guide has three main sections followed by an appendix with samples which are referenced in the overviews. A summary for each main section refers to the courses using the overviews and deliverable products.

Concept Paper Overview and Template Instructions: This is one of the main resources in the Business Research Methods course. The final product of Business Research Methods (BMB714D) is the Concept Paper. The Concept Paper is a brief document that serves as a road map for the dissertation. The Concept Paper provides the essential framework to guide the development of the dissertation proposal. After completion of the 16-week Business Research Methods course, the student must pass the Comprehensive Exam. When the exam is passed, the student becomes a “Doctoral Candidate” and can progress through the research and dissertation phase of the doctoral degree which includes, Dissertation 1: Proposal and Dissertation 2: Defense, courses. The next overview is used in these courses.

Proposal and Dissertation Overview and Template Instructions: The first section of this overview is one of the main resources used in the DBA Dissertation 1: The Proposal course (BMB715D). The final products are an approved proposal, oral defense, and IRB. The next part is the Dissertation Overview which is one of the main resources used in the DBA Dissertation 2: The Defense (BMB716D) course. In this course, students work individually with their dissertation committee chairperson and members on the completion of their dissertations. The final products are the dissertation and oral defense. Both proposal and dissertation courses require each student to develop an individual plan with a timeline to reach their milestone completion. Both courses are designed for 16 weeks and if they are not completed and passed in the 16-week term, the doctoral student must enroll in the continuation courses each eight-week term until completed. More detailed course descriptions and requirements are provided in the Addendum preceding this guide.

Criteria for Proposal and Dissertation Defense Presentations: This resource provides recommendations for the oral defenses as deliverable products in Action Research Proposal and Action Research Dissertation courses.

Appendices: This section provides different student samples and recommendations for drafting, proofreading, and editing. These appendix items are helpful during the regular and iterative reviews of dissertation sections and drafts, a common and important practice in the dissertation

journey. Students should already be familiar with the literature review section which is used in most doctoral courses to build skills in researching current literature and writing reviews in preparation for the dissertation. It is included as a reference for the concept paper and proposal. Important APA aids are provided; however, students should consult the most recent edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA) as the writing style. To progress successfully into a subsequent dissertation course, each final written deliverable must be completed and meet the minimum standards on the rubric found in this section.

***Note to Students:** Since the Doctoral Degree Program Catalog Student Handbook Addendum and Dissertation Guide describe an important part of your doctoral journey, read and review them and all accompanying documents at the beginning of your program, and reference them as necessary throughout your studies. Passing the dissertation defense and completing all editing, copyrighting, and publication requirements is considered one of the requirements to graduate with the DBA degree. For general questions about the dissertation process, please contact your Doctoral Program Advisor or doctoral professor.*

Concept Paper Overview and Template Instructions

The concept paper is a brief document that serves as a road map for the dissertation. It provides the essential framework to guide the development of the dissertation proposal. The concept paper builds on the 10 Strategic Points and should be no longer than 6-10 pages, excluding the Title and References pages. The concept paper will be expanded to become the dissertation proposal (Chapters 1, 2, and 3 of the dissertation), which will, in turn, be expanded to become the complete dissertation (Chapters 1-5). In short, the concept paper is a plan for the proposal. The 10 Strategic points provide the basis for the Concept paper and some of the points are combined in the different sections. After final approval of the concept paper, you will be assigned a dissertation chair and start working on your proposal.

The Dissertation Concept Paper should follow the guidelines in the most recent edition of the *Publication Manual* of the American Psychological Association (Times New Roman - 12 Font). Correct paragraph structure, sentence structure, punctuation, and APA format should be followed for sections that do not have numbered or bulleted listings.

Title Page: Center the following vertically and horizontally on the first page.

Dissertation Concept Paper
<Insert Concept paper Title >
Submitted by
<Insert Name>
<Insert University Name>
<Insert Submission Date>

Next Page:

- Start with **Concept Paper** and a colon, and then include the title as it appears on the title page. Double-space it over one line and center it at the top of the page.
Example: **Concept Paper: Title of your Proposed Study**
- Please note that your dissertation title will likely change as the project evolves.
- Then follow with each of the headings which are centered boldface headings with no Roman numerals. Paragraph(s) and/or numbered or bulleted listings are double-spaced after each main heading.

I: Introduction of Concept Paper (two to three paragraphs)

This section briefly overviews the research focus or problem, why this study is worth conducting, and how this study will be completed. Introduce your dissertation topic along with why the study is needed.

- Provide a summary of results from the prior empirical research on the topic.
- Using results, societal needs, recommendations for further study, or needs identified in three to five research studies (primarily from the last three to five years), the learner identifies the main need, also called a gap.

II: Literature Review Topics – (Main heading followed by A, B, and C subheadings with paragraphs). A and B Headings are left-aligned, boldface headings.

A. Background of the Problem/Gap (two to three paragraphs)

- Include a brief discussion demonstrating how literature has established the gap and a clear statement informing the reader of the gap.
- Discuss how the “need” or “defined gap” has evolved historically into the current problem or opportunity to be addressed by the proposed study (citing seminal and/or current research).

B. Theoretical Foundations/Conceptual Framework (two paragraphs)

Describe the theory(ies) that will provide the Theoretical Foundation Framework for the research study. This is the theory that provides the backbone of the study. Then include a description of the conceptual framework that provides the models or ideas to implement the theory and/or theories. Additionally, describe the relevance to the proposed study topic and the stated problem that came out of the Background section. Citations from seminal and/or other sources are provided to justify the selected theory(s) or model(s). Seminal sources are ordinarily significantly older than 5 years (consider, for example, such seminal thinkers as Piaget or Vygotsky). For a quantitative study, this section should provide the theory or model for each variable as well as the rationale for studying the relationship between the variables. For a qualitative study, this section should also discuss how the theories or models are relevant to understanding the phenomenon.

C. Review of the Literature (Each Literature Theme has a **bulleted list with references)**

For example, list the themes that will be used as organizers for the larger literature review. See below:

- Theme 1. Write a few sentences here to describe the theme and include appropriate citations.
- Theme 2. Write a few sentences here to describe the theme and include appropriate citations.
- Continue with more themes as needed.

III: Problem Statement (one paragraph)

This section includes the problem statement, the population affected, and how the study will contribute to solving the problem.

- Begin with a declarative statement of the problem under study, such as “It is not known if and to what degree/extent/if there is a difference...” (quantitative) or “It is not known how or why ...” (qualitative). The problem statement is developed based on the need or gap defined in the Background to the Study section.
- Describe the population of interest affected by the problem. The general population refers to all individuals that could be affected by the study problem.
- Describe the unit of analysis. For qualitative studies, this describes how the phenomenon will be studied. This can be individuals, groups, or organizations under study. For quantitative studies, the unit of analysis needs to be defined in terms of the variable structure (conceptual, operational, and measurement).
- Discuss the importance, scope, or opportunity for the problem and the importance of addressing the problem.

IV: Purpose of the Study (one paragraph)

The Purpose of the Study reflects the problem statement and identifies how the study will be accomplished. This section reflects what the study is about, connecting the problem statement, methodology and research design, target population, variables/phenomena, and geographic location.

- Begin with a declarative statement, “The purpose of this study is....” Included in this statement are also the research design, target population, variables (quantitative) or phenomena (qualitative) to be studied, and the geographic location.
- For quantitative studies, define the variables and relationship of variables.
- For qualitative studies, describe the nature of the phenomena to be explored.
- For mixed design study, answer both of the above.

V: Research Questions, Hypotheses, and Variables (list of numbered research questions and associated hypothesis for the quantitative research questions)

This section narrows the focus of the study and specifies the research questions to address the problem statement. Based on the research questions, it describes the variables or groups and their hypothesized relationship for a quantitative study or the phenomena under investigation for a qualitative study. The research questions and hypotheses should be derived from, and are directly aligned with, the problem statement and theoretical foundation (theory(s) or model(s)).

- The recommendation is a minimum of two research questions along with related hypotheses and variables which is generally the requirement for a quantitative study.

- Also recommended is a minimum of two research questions along with the phenomenon description which is generally the requirement for a qualitative study.
- Note: The research questions are based on the Problem Statement and Theoretical Foundation model(s) or theory(ies). There should be no research questions that are not aligned to the Problem Statement.

VI. Methodology and Design Rationale for Methodology (one paragraph)

The Rationale for Methodology section justifies the methodology the researcher plans to use for conducting the study. It argues how the methodological choice (quantitative or qualitative) is the best approach to answer the research questions and address the problem statement. Finally, it contains citations from textbooks and articles on research methodology and/or articles on related studies to provide evidence to support the argument for the selected methodology.

- Identify the specific research methodology for the study. Justify the methodology to be used for the study by discussing why it is an appropriate approach for answering the research question(s) and addressing the problem statement.
- Quantitative Studies: Justify in terms of the problem statement and the variables for which data will be collected. Qualitative Studies: Justify in terms of problem statement and phenomenon.
- Use citations from seminal (authoritative) sources (textbooks and/or empirical research literature) to justify the selected methodology. Note: Introductory or survey research textbooks (such as Creswell) are not considered seminal sources.

VII. Nature and the Research Design for the Study (two to three paragraphs)

This section describes the specific research design to answer the research questions and why this approach was selected. Here, the learner discusses why the selected design is the best design to address the problem statement and research questions as compared to other designs. This section contains a description of the research sample being studied, as well as, the process that will be used to collect the data on the sample.

- Identify and describe the selected design for the study.
- Justify why the selected design addresses the problem statement and research questions. Quantitative Studies: Justifies the selected design based on the appropriateness of the design to address the research questions and data for each variable. Qualitative Studies: Justifies the selected design based on the appropriateness of design to address research questions and study the phenomenon.
- Briefly describe the target population and sample for the study.
- Identify the sources and instruments that will be used to collect data needed to answer the research questions.
- Briefly describe data collection procedures to collect data on the sample.

VIII. Research Materials, Instrumentation, or Sources of Data (bulleted list or two/three paragraphs)

This section identifies and describes the types of data that will be collected, as well as the specific research materials, instruments, and sources used to collect those data (tests, surveys, validated instruments, questionnaires, interview protocols, databases, media, etc.).

- **Quantitative Instruments/Research Materials:** Provide a bulleted list of the instrumentation and/or materials for data collection. Describe the survey instruments or equipment/materials used (experimental research), and specify the type and level of data collected with each instrument. Include citations from original publications by instrument developers (and subsequent users as appropriate) or related studies.
- **Note:** For quantitative studies, the level of data is the unit of analysis that needs to be defined in terms of the variable structure (conceptual, operational, and measurement). At the operational level, the unit of analysis gets determined and defined by (and must align with) the research question/problem statement. For example, the conceptual level of a variable in a school setting may be student achievement. The operational level of the variable may be student performance in social studies. The measurement level for the variable may be individual student scores on the high-stakes test or the percentage of overall students passing the test (at the school level). For this action research, variable structures will be determined in terms of teachers and/or educators whereas student variables will be indirect.
- **Qualitative Sources of Data:** Describes the structure of each data collection instrument and data sources (tests, questionnaires, interview protocols, observation databases, media, etc.).

IX. Data Collection and Management (bullet or numbered list of data collection steps, not exceeding one page)

This section details the data collection process and procedures so that another researcher can conduct or replicate the study. It includes authorizations and detailed steps.

- **Quantitative Studies:** List steps for the actual data collection that would allow replication of the study by another researcher, including how each instrument or data source was used, how and where data were collected, and recorded. Includes a linear sequence of actions or step-by-step procedures used to carry out all the major steps for data collection. Includes a workflow and corresponding timeline, presenting a logical, sequential, and transparent protocol for data collection that would allow another researcher to replicate the study. Note: Data from different sources may have to be collected in parallel (e.g., online surveys for, digital marketing, and employee or customer focus groups, AND retrieval of big data from population surveys/U.S. Census Bureau, or World Bank etc). A flow chart is okay—"linear" may not apply to all situations.

- **Qualitative Studies:** Provide a detailed description of the data collection process, including all sources of data and methods used, such as interviews, member checking, observations, surveys, field tests, and expert panel review. Note: The collected data must be sufficient in breadth and depth to answer the research question(s) and interpreted and presented correctly, by theme, research question, and/or source of data.
- Describe the procedures for obtaining participant informed consent and for protecting the rights and well-being of the study sample participants.

X. Data Analysis Procedures (one to two paragraphs of bulleted format)

This section provides detailed steps for the analytic procedures to be used to conduct data analysis. Describe in detail the relevant data collected for each stated research question and/or each variable within each hypothesis (if applicable). Read the following notes to guide your discussion.

Quantitative Studies:

"In detail" means scales (and subscales) of specified instruments AND type of data for each variable of interest. IMPORTANT: For (quasi) experimental studies, provide a detailed description of all treatment materials per treatment condition, as part of the description of the independent variable corresponding to the experimental manipulation. What: Describes, in detail, statistical and non-statistical analysis to be used and procedures used to conduct the data analysis.

Quantitative Studies: (1) describe data file preparation (descriptive statistics used to check completeness and accuracy; for files from different sources, possibly aggregating data to obtain a common unit of analysis in all files, necessarily merging files (using the key variable defining the unit of analysis); (2) computation of statistics for the sample profile; (3) computation of (subscales and) scales; (4) reliability analysis for all scales and subscales; (5) computation of descriptive statistics for all variables of interest in the study (except those already presented in the sample profile); (6) state and justify all statistical procedures ("tests") needed to generate the information to answer all research questions; and (7) state assumptions checks for all those statistical procedures (including the tests and/or charts to be computed).

Quantitative Analysis - states the level of statistical significance for each test as appropriate and describes tests of assumptions for each statistical test.

Qualitative Studies:

This section begins by identifying and discussing the specific analysis approach or strategy, followed by a discussion of coding procedures to be used. Note: coding procedures may be different for Thematic Analysis, Narrative Analysis, Phenomenological Analysis, or Grounded Theory Analysis.

Why: Justifies each of the (statistical and non-statistical) data analysis procedures used in the study.

Show Steps that Support Evidence

Qualitative Analysis - evidence of the qualitative analysis approach, such as the coding and theming process, must be completely described and included in the analysis /interpretation process. Clear evidence of how codes moved to themes must be presented.

XI. References – List all your references on a separate page following APA format and alphabetical order.

XII. APA Instructional Aids: <https://apa.style.apa.org/instructional-aids/handouts-guides> These resources are in PDF format.

- [APA Style Guide to Common Reference Examples](#)
- [APA Style Reference Formatting Activity \(.docx\)](#)
- [APA Style Reference Guide for Journal Articles, Books, and Edited Book Chapters](#)
- [APA Style Scaffolded Reference Elements Worksheet](#)
- [Avoiding Plagiarism and Self-Plagiarism Guide](#)
- [Creating an APA Style Reference List Guide](#)
- [In-Text Citation Checklist](#)
- [Journal Article Reference Checklist](#)
- [Paraphrasing and Citation Activities](#)
- [Six Steps to Proper Citation Infographic](#)
- [Abbreviations Guide](#)
- [Numbers and Statistics Guide](#)
- [Transitions Guide](#)
- [Discussion Phrases Guide](#)

Proposal and Dissertation Overview and Template Instructions

This overview provides a formatting template and guide for writing the proposal and completing the dissertation. The template is used for the proposal and then continues with the last two chapters of the final dissertation. Also, this guide provides the drafting of the final dissertation for students who have written a concept paper and are enrolled in the proposal course.

- **Section I: The Proposal** is an overview that describes the proposal content as an extension of the concept paper which was completed in the Advanced Research Methods course.
- **Section II: Completing the Dissertation** continues with the completion of the dissertation Chapters IV and V as well as finalizing all front and back matters.
- **Section III: Template Instructions for Proposals and Dissertations:** This is a general guide that provides instructions for the title page, pagination, and formatting of level headings.

Section I: The Proposal

Chapters I, II, and III of the proposal are expansions of the concept paper. The length of Chapter I varies from proposal to proposal, but most range from 15-25 pages. Chapter II: Literature Review is a minimum of 30 pages. There are four criteria in determining the adequacy of the review of literature: (1) complete enough to inform and enlighten the reader, (2) clear in every regard, (3) correct in style and accuracy, and (4) concise as possible while meeting the complete criterion. Chapter III: Design, Methodology, and Procedures has some of the sections from Chapter I with more detail. This chapter provides a full description of the general research design. The length of this chapter varies from 15 to 25 pages, depending on the type of study. This template provides descriptions for the content of each chapter. Concept Paper origin(s), *which are italicized*, are listed for every section as guides. Each chapter begins on a separate page with a centered chapter heading as described in the Level Heading guide found in Section III of this overview.

Separate Page

Chapter I: Introduction

Concept Paper Section: I. Introduction of Concept Paper

The **Chapter I: Introduction** heading is placed on a separate and continuing page. This section should be approximately 4-7 pages of background narrative, citing literature as appropriate and needed. You have two purposes in this section: (a) to grab your readers' attention and (b) to enlighten your readers about the thrust of the study and its importance. This section sets the

background and provides support for the problem statement. The funnel strategy (general to specific) which starts with a discussion of a major business dilemma and then narrows down to the focus of your study is a recommended strategy for this section.

Statement of the Problem

Concept Paper Section: III. Problem Statement

Restate the paragraph which has the problem statement that is based on the need or gap. Include the following in this paragraph:

- Describe the population of interest affected by the problem. The general population refers to all individuals that could be affected by the study problem.
- Describe the unit of analysis. For qualitative studies, this describes how the phenomenon will be studied. This can be individuals, groups, or organizations under study. For quantitative studies, the unit of analysis needs to be defined in terms of the variable structure (conceptual, operational, and measurement).
- Discuss the importance, scope, or opportunity for the problem and the importance of addressing the problem.

Statement of Purpose

Concept Paper Section: IV. Purpose of the Study

Restate the paragraph from the concept paper. The Purpose of the Study reflects the problem statement and identifies how the study will be accomplished. This section reflects what the study is about, connecting the problem statement, methodology and research design, target population, variables/phenomena, and geographic location.

Methodology

Concept Paper Sections: VI. Methodology and Design Rationale for Methodology and VII. Nature and the Research Design for the Study

Combine concept paper sections VI and VII to clearly describe the methodology.

Provide a full description of your general research design, as well as the specific methods and procedures proposed for your study. The methodology should be sufficiently detailed so that it can be replicated. If you are following a methodological approach developed by others, cite the relevant studies.

Theoretical Framework

Concept Paper Section: II. Literature Review Topics: B. Theoretical Foundation and Conceptual Framework

Restate your concept paper paragraphs describing the specific theories, models, or concepts to be used in the study. Describe the theory(ies) that will provide the Theoretical Foundation Framework for the research study. This is the theory that provides the backbone of the study. Then include a description of the conceptual framework that provides the models or ideas to implement the theory and/or theories. Additionally, describe the relevance to the proposed study

topic and the stated problem that came out of the Background section. Citations from seminal and/or other sources are provided to justify the selected theory(s) or model(s).

Research Questions and Associated Hypotheses

Concept Paper Section: V. Research Questions, Hypothesis, and Variables

The research questions are based on the theoretical Foundation and Problem Statement sections. The questions may be indented or bulleted. The number of questions depends on the type of study; however, you will need a minimum of two questions. Below is a sample listing of the questions referred to as Research Question 1, etc.

Sample:

The qualitative research questions follow:

Research Question 1 (or QRQ1):

Research Question 2 (or QRQ2):

The quantitative research questions follow:

Research Question 1 (or RQ1):

Research Question 2 (or RQ2):

These research questions generated the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1(or H1):

Null Hypothesis 1 (or Ho1):

Hypothesis 2 (or H2):

Null Hypothesis 2 (or Ho2) :

Significance of the Study

Concept Paper Sections: I. Introduction and II. Literature Review Topics: Background of The Problem/Gap

This section has a paragraph with an explicit statement of significance specific to the topic studied. Answer the following questions;

- Why is it important to conduct the study?
- What theoretical/practical reasons are there for wanting to know the answers to the research questions?

It is important to carefully define the next three sections. They involve considering factors that may make your study as doable or not doable. Since assumptions and delimitations often lead to limitations, show limitations last.

Assumptions of the Study:

Concept Paper Section: Not in Concept Paper

Assumptions are those things that, relative to your study, you are “taking for granted.” You may find it easier to write this section later as you develop your methodology in Chapter 3. This may

be a paragraph or numbered list identifying at least two assumptions or things you assume are true.

Delimitations of the Study

Concept Paper Section: Not in Concept Paper

Delimitations are choices made by the researcher which should be mentioned. They describe the boundaries that you have set for the study. They are the shortcomings, conditions, or influences that cannot be controlled by the **researcher** that place restrictions on your methodology. This is a numbered list identifying at least 2 delimitations.

Limitations

Concept Paper Section: Not in Concept Paper

Limitations are the limitations over which you, the researcher, have no control over. These might include resources for your topic that are limiting you from doing more extensive study, or in the case of active research, subjects who fail to complete the appropriate test items, or lack of whatever which might cause you to eliminate that person from your study. This is a numbered list identifying at least two limitations (things that pre-exist which will limit your research).

Definitions of Terms

Concept Paper Section: Not in Concept Paper

An introductory sentence should be used to transition to the definition of key terms. The terms in this section should be terms directly related to your research that will be used by you throughout the research. It is up to you, the researcher, to define each term as you want the reader to know that term. In every case possible, cite a source for the definition. It is permissible to have some definitions without citations when you are listing a “commonly understood” term or you have no source. (The following are examples for formatting purposes).

Achievement. (The definition should be written as 1 or more complete sentences and not underlined.) (Thompson, 1998).

Attendance: _____ (Smith & Jones, 1997)

Summary of Rationale for This Study

Concept Paper Section: Not in Concept Paper

Summarize this chapter’s key points in approximately two to three paragraphs. Then present a one-paragraph description of how the remainder of the study is organized (that is, Chapters 2 through 3).

Separate Page

Chapter II: Literature Review

The **Chapter II. Literature Review** heading is placed on a separate and continuing page. This chapter reviews what has been written regarding the proposed study. The literature cited should support the theoretical argument being made and demonstrate that the author has a grasp of the major ideas and findings that pertain to the study. The literature review is written to place your study within the context of existing knowledge and other studies in your discipline.

Chapter Overview:

Concept Paper Section: Not in Concept Paper

Write a brief introduction of 2-3 paragraphs to refresh your reader's memory about the problem and purpose of the study you presented in Chapter 1. Also, tell your reader about the form this chapter will take in terms of purpose, scope, and sequence/organization. The introduction of this chapter should include the titles of the main headings you have in this chapter. For the most part, the verbs in this chapter are past tense. It is a skill on the part of graduate students to report on the literature in such a way that the student also compares, contrasts, and analyzes what is found in the literature.

Background of the Problem and Gap in Research

Concept Paper Section: II. Literature Review Topics: A. Background of the Problem/Gap

Expand the concept paper section and discuss what other researchers, experts, theorists, etc. have already said about the subject. Discuss existing scholarship, summarizing the arguments from prior studies and/or seminal works. Your treatment of the literature should help to identify the gaps, blind spots, and interpretive errors that

make your own proposed action research productive. Discuss how the “need” or “defined gap” has evolved historically into the current problem or opportunity to be addressed by the proposed study (citing seminal and/or current research). The following are general guidelines for this section.

- Introduce your review by pointing out the major research topic that will be discussed
- Identify the broad problem and avoid global historical chronology. (Do not attempt to write about everything you found on your topic.)
- Discuss the general importance of your topic for the business field.
- Use the studies in the literature review as evidence that your study and research questions are significant.

Theoretical Foundations

Concept Paper Section: II. Literature Review Topics B. Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

Describe the theory(ies) that will provide the Theoretical Foundation Framework for the research study. This is the theory that provides the backbone of the study. Then include a description of the conceptual framework that provides the models or ideas to implement the theory and/or theories. Additionally, describe the relevance to the proposed study topic and the stated problem that came out of the Background section. Citations from seminal and/or other sources are provided to justify the selected theory(s) or model(s). Seminal sources are ordinarily significantly older than 5 years (consider, for example, such seminal thinkers as Piaget or

Vygotsky). For a quantitative study, this section should provide the theory or model for each variable as well as the rationale for studying the relationship between the variables. For a qualitative study, this section should also discuss how the theories or models are relevant to understanding the phenomenon.

Key Themes

Concept Paper Section: II. Literature Review Topics C. Review of the Literature

Describe the key themes relevant to all the variables being studied. This section is an expansion of the concept paper with more detail and citations. Theme subtitles are Level 3 - APA Headings.

Summary

Concept Paper Section: Not in Concept Paper

This chapter should have a one-paragraph summary that ties together the main headings of the chapter. Also, previews for the reader what is coming in Chapter 3.

Se par at e Page

Chapter III: Design, Methodology and Procedures

The **Chapter III: Design, Methodology, and Procedures** heading is placed on a separate and continuing page. This chapter provides a full description of your general research design, as well as the specific methods and procedures used in your research project. The methodology should be sufficiently detailed so that it can be replicated. If you are following a methodological approach developed by others, cite the relevant studies. Provide any diagrams, charts, and illustrations as appropriate for your study.

Chapter Overview

Concept Paper Section: Not in Concept Paper

Write a brief introduction of 2-3 paragraphs to introduce the reader to this chapter and to refresh the reader's memory about (a) the problem being investigated, (b) the research questions posed to guide the researcher in fulfilling the purposes of the study, (c) the hypotheses to be tested. Also, tell your reader about the form this chapter will take in terms of purpose, scope, and sequence/organization. The introduction of this chapter should include the titles of the main headings you have in this chapter.

Statement of the Problem

Concept Paper Section: III. Problem Statement

Restate the paragraph which has the problem statement that is based on the need or gap. Include the following in this paragraph:

- Describe the population of interest affected by the problem. The general population refers to all individuals that could be affected by the study problem.
- Describe the unit of analysis. For qualitative studies, this describes how the phenomenon will be studied. This can be individuals, groups, or organizations under study. For quantitative studies, the unit of analysis needs to be defined in terms of the variable structure (conceptual, operational, and measurement).
- Discuss the importance, scope, or opportunity for the problem and the importance of addressing the problem.

Research Questions and Associated Hypotheses

Concept Paper Section: V. Research Questions, Hypothesis, and Variables

After an introductory sentence, simply restate the research questions from Chapter 1.

Sample:

The qualitative research questions follow:

Research Question 1 (or QRQ1):

Research Question 2 (or QRQ2):

The quantitative research questions follow:

Research Question 1 (or RQ1):

Research Question 2 (or RQ2):

These research questions generated the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1(or H1):

Null Hypothesis 1 (or Ho1):

Hypothesis 2 (or H2):

Null Hypothesis 2 (or Ho2) :

The Purpose of the Study

Concept Paper: IV. Purpose of the Study

Restate the paragraph from the concept paper. The Purpose of the Study reflects the problem statement and identifies how the study will be accomplished. This section reflects what the study is about, connecting the problem statement, methodology and research design, target population, variables/phenomena, and geographic location.

Action Research Design and Methodology

Concept Paper Section: VI. Methodology and Design Rationale for Methodology

Provide a full description of your general research design, as well as the specific methods and procedures used in your research. The methodology should be sufficiently detailed so that it can be replicated. Describe the action research aspect of your study. Identify if the methodology you selected is qualitative quantitative and/or mixed. This section justifies the methodology the researcher plans to use for conducting the study. It argues how the methodological choice (quantitative or qualitative) is the best approach to answer the research questions and address the

problem statement. Finally, it contains citations from textbooks and articles on research methodology and/or articles on related studies to provide evidence to support the argument for the selected methodology. If you are following a methodological approach developed by others, cite the relevant studies.

Setting and Time Frame for the Study

Section: VII. Nature and the Research Design for the Study

Describe the place(s) where the research will be undertaken and the approximate time frame. By reading this section, someone outside the situation (in another country) should be able to understand the study setting and how it is similar or differs from their setting. This section is an expansion of the concept pa, providing more detail.

Participants in the Study

Concept Paper Section: VII. Nature and the Research Design for the Study

Describe each of the following and provide an estimate of their size:

- Population (the group you want to generalize this study to or will be discussed based on the research findings)
- Target Population (the group you will approach to collect the data)
- Sample (the final number of completed and usable responses you need to get for each instrument to meet requirements from the dissertation template)
- Note: For qualitative studies show the sample size for each instrument (e.g., interview 12-15; questionnaire 30-40; focus groups 4-5 in each of 2 focus groups; 10-25 artifacts; 8-20 photographs, etc.)
- Note: If using a questionnaire for a qualitative study you will most likely need 40+ returned to be able to code the open-ended questions to get any meaningful data

Description of Training Model and Professional Development Content

Concept Paper Sections: II. Literature Review Topics. Conceptual Framework and VII. Nature and the Research Design for the Study

Describe your training model and the type of professional development. This will include a description of the different sequential components of your training with a time frame for each. Also, discuss whether this is face-to-face training, online training, via a blog, etc. Include the entire time frame for the training and your plan for participants who may miss any part of the training.

Data Collection and Instrumentation

Concept Paper Section: VIII. Research Materials, Instrumentation or Sources of Data and IX. Data Collection and Management

The length of this section will vary greatly from dissertation to dissertation. The researcher is obligated to describe precisely and expansively the data collection methodology (e.g., mail survey, personal

or telephone interviews, participant observations, and accessing existing databases). Include a separate section for each instrument adopted or developed for data collection, whether that might be published instruments, researcher-developed instruments, interview schedules, or test results (like the MAP). Be sure to include information for each instrument on the (a) form of the instrument, with sample items and scaling/scoring information, (b) assurances, or at least estimates, of the validity and reliability of the instrument, and (c) reference to an appendix in which the reader will find the complete instrument and all correspondence and directions which will be sent to the respondent subjects in the sample. A considerable number of literature citations will probably appear for each instrument. Three examples of headings for instruments follow:

Work Values Inventory (MVI)

Minnesota Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ)

Missouri Mastery and Achievement Tests (MMAT)

Data Analysis

Concept Paper Section: X. Data Analysis Procedures

This section describes the detailed steps for the analytic procedures to be used to conduct data analysis. The steps are written in paragraph format. Also include descriptions of the relevant data that will be collected for each stated research question and/or each variable within each hypothesis (if applicable). Refer to concept paper notes regarding details for each type of research question. Furthermore, specify the statistical analyses that will be used to answer the research questions and/or test the research hypotheses. Cite literature sources for your discussion of the statistical techniques.

Summary

Concept Paper Section: Not in Concept Paper

This chapter should have a summary that ties together the main headings of this chapter. Also, be sure to preview for the reader what is coming in Chapter 3 and any appendix items.

References:

Concept Paper Section: XI. References

The **References** heading is placed on a separate and continuing page. The page has a listing of all your references following APA format and alphabetical order.

Appendices

Concept Paper Section: Not in Concept Paper

This is the last section that follows the reference section. One page with the centered boldfaced title **Appendices** will serve as the introductory page for all appendix items. Each appendix item follows sequentially after this page. Each item has a boldfaced title using alphabetical sequence, for example, **Appendix A: Timetable**. Appendix items appear in the same order as presented in the content. Sequencing of appendix items may change according to revisions and /or added

information. Types of instrumentation will vary according to the study as provided in the list below:

- Timetable
- IRB Request for Initial Review
- Recruitment materials
- Consent Forms
- Request for Letter(s) of Agreement from participating agency/agencies
- Interview protocols and sample instructions if used for the study
- Surveys and/or instruments for collecting data

Section II: Completing the Dissertation

Before starting the next chapters

- Revise proposal content to past or present perfect tense for the dissertation manuscript
Examples: Past: Piaget showed... or Present Perfect Tense: Researchers have shown...
(See Tense Guide in Appendix Section)
- Complete all recommended revisions and/or edits that were provided after your proposal defense
- Proofread to ensure an error-free manuscript and adherence to APA format
- Ensure that the action research training model/intervention described in Chapter III has been implemented and all data has been collected.

Separate Page

Chapter IV: Findings

Chapter Overview

Write a brief introduction of one to two paragraphs to introduce the reader to this chapter.

This chapter is a presentation of the data. No conclusions or implications should appear in this chapter.

Data Collection and Instrumentation (left aligned boldfaced heading - 2 to 3 paragraphs)

This section details the data collection process and procedures so that another researcher can conduct or replicate the study. It includes authorizations and detailed steps. The researcher is obligated to describe precisely and expansively the data collection methodology such as consent forms, mail surveys, personal or telephone interviews, and participant observations. Mixed methods studies describe the use of quantitative and qualitative data.

- **Quantitative:** List steps for the actual data collection that would allow replication of the study by another researcher, including how each instrument or data source was used, how and where data were collected, and recorded. Includes a linear sequence of actions or step-by-step procedures used to carry out all the major steps for data collection. Includes

a workflow and corresponding timeline, presenting a logical, sequential, and transparent protocol for data collection that would allow another researcher to replicate the study.

- **Qualitative:** Provide a detailed description of the data collection process, including all sources of data and methods used, such as interviews, member checking, observations, surveys, field tests, and expert panel review. Note: The collected data must be sufficient in breadth and depth to answer the research question(s) and interpreted and presented correctly, by theme, research question, and/or source of data.

Data Analysis Procedures (left aligned boldfaced heading- 2 to 3 paragraphs)

This section presents a description of the process that was used to analyze the data. Data analysis procedures can be framed relative to each research question. Data can also be organized by chronology of phenomena, by themes and patterns, or by other approaches as deemed appropriate by design and for the type of study. This section should specify the procedures that were specifically carried out to ensure the reader understands how the analytic process was conducted. In mixed methods studies, the quantitative data analysis procedures are presented before the qualitative procedures. The following provides the narrative details for each section.

- **Quantitative Studies:** "In detail" means scales (and subscales) of specified instruments and type of data for each variable of interest. Quantitative Studies: (1) describe data file preparation (descriptive statistics used to check completeness and accuracy; for files from different sources, possibly aggregating data to obtain a common unit of analysis in all files, necessarily merging files (using the key variable defining the unit of analysis); (2) computation of statistics for the sample profile; (3) computation of (subscales and) scales; (4) reliability analysis for all scales and subscales; (5) computation of descriptive statistics for all variables of interest in the study (except those already presented in the sample profile); (6) state and justify all statistical procedures ("tests") needed to generate the information to answer all research questions; and (7) state assumptions checks for all those statistical procedures (including the tests and/or charts to be computed). This section describing the quantitative analysis states the level of statistical significance for each test as appropriate and describes tests of assumptions for each statistical test.
- **Qualitative Studies:** This section begins by identifying and discussing the specific analysis approach or strategy, followed by a discussion of coding procedures that were used. Note: coding procedures may be different for Thematic Analysis, Narrative Analysis, Phenomenological Analysis, or Grounded Theory Analysis. The justification for each of the (statistical and non-statistical) data analysis procedures used in the study is provided. This section describes the evidence of the qualitative analysis approach, such as the coding and theming process. Clear evidence of how codes moved to themes must be presented.

Findings (Flush Left, Bold, Title Case Heading - # to # paragraphs)

This section, which is the main section of this chapter, presents an overview and analysis of the data in a non-valuative, unbiased, and organized manner that relates to the research question(s).

No conclusions or implications should appear in this chapter. In research, a finding is an empirical fact, based on data collected, that does not just rely on opinion (even if it is that of an expert). The findings section shows what the researcher found after data analysis. The results must be presented without implication, speculation, assessment, evaluation, or interpretation, as the discussion of results and conclusions are left for Chapter V. Guidelines for including tables and figures in this section follow:

- Make sure to include appropriate graphics to present the results.
- Always introduce, present, and discuss the visual organizers in narrative form before the visual organizer placement. Never insert a visual organizer without these three steps. A figure is a graph, chart, map, drawing, or photograph.
- Do not include a figure unless it adds substantively to the understanding of the results or duplicates other elements in the narrative. If a figure is used, a label must be placed under the figure.
- As with tables, refer to the figure by number in the narrative preceding the placement of the figure.
- Make sure a table or figure is not split between pages. In mixed methods studies, the quantitative findings are presented before the qualitative findings. The following provides the narrative details for each section.

Presentation of Quantitative Data Analysis (Flush Left, Bold Italic, Title Case Heading)

List the research question(s) in the same sequence as presented in previous chapters. The following format illustrates the sequencing and discussion of findings for each quantitative research question.

Use an introductory sentence then present each research question.

Research Question 1: ?

This should be followed by a discussion of the type of statistical analysis that was utilized followed by the related hypotheses if there is a related hypothesis. The analysis of data varies greatly depending on the research questions, hypothesis, and design. Following the statement of the hypothesis, a discussion should be given which reviews the resulting data from the statistical analysis. This should be presented in a narrative and appropriate tabular form. A concluding statement should indicate the rejection or retention of the null hypothesis.

Use an introductory sentence then present each research question.

Research Question 2: ?

This should be followed by a discussion of the type of statistical analysis that was utilized followed by the related hypotheses if there is a related hypothesis. You may not have a related hypothesis for a research question or you may have one or more. Therefore the analysis of data varies greatly depending upon the research questions, hypothesis, and design. Following the statement of the hypothesis, a discussion should be given which reviews the resulting data from the statistical analysis. This should be presented in a narrative and appropriate tabular form. A concluding statement should indicate the rejection or retention of the null hypothesis.

Follow the previous format for subsequent quantitative research questions.

Presentation of Qualitative Data Analysis (Flush Left, Bold Italic, Title Case Heading)

List the research question(s) in the same sequence as presented in previous chapters. The previous format illustrates the sequencing and discussion of findings for each qualitative research question. Answer the research question by drawing on the thematic results and (if relevant) descriptive statistics. The results must be presented without implication, speculation, assessment, evaluation, or interpretation, as the discussion of results and conclusions are left for Chapter V. For qualitative studies, it is important to provide an explanation of how the analysis was conducted and the coding was used to arrive at a set of themes about the subject. In qualitative studies, if thematic analysis is used, the following questions may be used to present the findings:

1. What themes emerged across all data sources and how were those themes identified?
2. Does the learner provide examples that the themes exist from multiple, well-specified, and described, sources of data?
3. What topics were mentioned most often?
4. What issues were most important to the people in the study?
5. How do the participants view the topic of research?
6. How can the categories identified in the data be ordered into meaningful, grounded theories?

Summary (Flush Left, Bold, Title Case Heading – 1 paragraph)

This chapter should have a summary that ties together the main headings of this chapter. It briefly restates essential data and data analysis presented in this chapter, and it helps the reader see and understand the relevance of the data and analysis to the research question(s). Finally, it provides a lead or transition into Chapter V.

Se par at e Page

Chapter V: Discussions and Conclusions (Centered, Bold, Title Case Heading)

Overview of the Study

Write a brief introduction of one to two paragraphs to introduce the reader to this final chapter as it relates to the preceding chapters.

Discussion of Findings: Quantitative and Qualitative (Flush Left, Bold, Title Case Heading – pages based on # of RQs)

The discussion section of this chapter presents a summary of the quantitative and qualitative findings and what the results mean. The discussion focuses on the meaning, importance, and relevance of results for each research question. The section explains and evaluates the findings and shows how they relate to the literature review and research questions. The discussion is presented factually as an organized narrative and in the same sequence as the research questions in Chapter 4. No new data should be introduced in Chapter 5; however, references should be made to findings or citations presented in earlier chapters. The discussion should have the following:

- Study findings are compared, contrasted, and/or synthesized in context to prior research on the topic (Chapter II- Literature Review).
- A convincing discussion is provided on how the study is aligned to and/or advances the research on the topic.
- Findings are bounded by the research study design described in Chapters 1, 2, and 3.
- Findings are supported by the data and theory and directly answer the research questions.
- A discussion of any unexpected findings may also be included. Provide a paragraph about the finding and then describe it. Also, identify potential limitations and weaknesses inherent in the study. Then comment on the importance of these limitations to the interpretation of the findings and how they may impact their validity.

Conclusions (Flush Left, Bold, Title Case Heading – pages based on # of RQs)

This last section of the research paper brings the research to full circle. The conclusion section is a summary of the whole data, which reminds the readers of the purpose of the study and what has been found. This chapter is anything and everything that the researcher wants to say about the research that has been conducted. Conclusions should be based on the following guidelines:

- Should be based on the research questions in Chapter I. They should be presented in the same order as the research questions. After the conclusion is stated, references may be used to support the statement.
- Are major generalizations and answer the research problem developed in Chapters I and II.
- Reflect personal opinion as long as it is backed with the data, grounded in the study results presented in Chapter IV, and synthesized/supported within the existing research literature presented in Chapter II.
- Are supported with references to the theoretical basis.
- Are reasoned judgments that correspond to the respective findings which have been synthesized and interpreted.
- Are significant and impact the understanding of the problem(s) that the research project examines.

Implications (Flush Left, Bold, Title Case Heading – 2 to 3 paragraphs)

Implications are the strongest assertions derived from the study and why they matter in response to the purpose, research problem, theory, outcomes, existing literature, and future expectations. The implications are stated as new insights or “So Whats” regarding real-world applications of the study’s findings. Implications of the findings are relative to the study’s context and based on the following types.

Theoretical Implications: Theoretical implications are interpretations of the findings in terms of the research question(s) that guided the study. These implications include a critical, retrospective examination of the theory/theoretical framework presented in the Chapter 2 Literature Review. For example, an implication statement and explanation can be made if the findings are in keeping

with the theoretical basis of the research study. If this is not the case, an implication can be made as to why the theory was not appropriate to the study.

Practical Implications: Practical implications are statements describing the applications of new insights derived from the study to solve real and significant problems. These implications refer to how the results of the study can be applied in professional practice or issues. Business practices, management strategies, leadership, and marketing are a few examples which can serve as the basis for practical implications.

Limitations: (Flush Left, Bold, Title Case Heading – 2 to 3 paragraphs)

Review the potential limitations which were stated in Chapter I of the Proposal. Discuss those that may have affected your findings. This can include the study design or problems during implementation. Design issues include sampling, assessment, procedures, and design of choice. Implementation issues include low sampling, measurement, grouping, effect size, and internal/external validity. Discuss the limitations that are now evident in the study after implementation and findings have been reviewed.

Recommendations for the Future: (Flush Left, Bold, Title Case Heading – 2 to 3 paragraphs)

The recommendations are specifically for future research in the context of the study. Two kinds of implications for future research are possible: one based on what the study did find or do, and the other based on what the study did *not* find or do. Generally, future recommendations for practitioners could be to look at different kinds of subjects in different kinds of settings, and interventions with new kinds of protocols or dependent measures. These recommendations for policymakers can be stated as likely possibilities for leaders who write, initiate, and or review current business practices and policies regarding the study's implementation and conclusions based on findings. All recommendations should be based on your findings and could include practical, real-world suggestions.

Summary of the Study (Flush Left, Bold, Title Case Heading – 2 to 3 paragraphs)

The concluding words of Chapter 5 should emphasize both the most important points of the study, study strengths and weaknesses, and directions for future research.

Section III: Template Instructions for Proposals and Dissertations:

The Proposal and Dissertation should follow the guidelines in the most recent edition of the *Publication Manual* of the American Psychological Association: double-spaced, Times New Roman - 12 font and one-inch margins. Correct paragraph structure, sentence structure, punctuation, and APA format should be followed for sections that do not have numbered or bulleted listings. Check for the following common errors:

1. Are the sentences too long? You can improve your writing immensely by using shorter sentences.
2. Are the paragraphs too long or too short (one or two sentences)? This is a common problem.

3. Is any of the writing awkward, vague, long-winded, or too informal? The best writing is concise, avoiding superfluous wording.
4. Avoid inadvertent plagiarism: have you cited your sources each time you express an idea that is not your own?

The following formatting is recommended for Acacia Proposals and Dissertations.

Title Page: Center the following vertically and horizontally on the first page.

<Insert Title >

Submitted by

<Insert Name>

<Insert University Name>

<Insert Submission Date>

Pagination

1. All page numbers are centered bottom of the page.
2. Start with the **Table of Contents**. Use the headings and subheadings as entries for the Table of Contents. APA headings range from Level 1 to Level 5. Levels 3 to 5 are optional designations in the Table of Contents even though they may be part of the content. Level headings are not boldfaced in the Table of Contents as they appear in the content. (See #3 below.)
3. Next is a separate page for the content: Center chapter headings and use Roman numerals, for example, **Chapter I: Introduction**.
4. Each chapter is organized with headings and subheading sections. Follow *APA Headings* – 7th ed. formatting: See: <https://apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/paper-format/headings>

Dissertation Headings and Subheadings

Each chapter is organized with headings and subheading sections. Follow *APA* Headings – 7th ed. formatting: See: <https://apa.styl.e.a.pa.org/styl-e-gram-mar-guide/line/s/paper-form-a-t/headings>

Level	Format
1	Centered, Bold, Title Case Heading Abstract Dedication Acknowledgments Table of Contents List of Tables List of Figures Chapter I: Introduction Chapter II: Review of Literature Chapter III: Design Methodology, and Procedures Chapter IV: Findings and Presentation of Data Chapter V: Summary, Conclusions, Implications, and Recommendations Appendix References Biographical Sketch
2	Flush Left, Bold, Title Case Heading All Chapter Subheadings such as the following for Chapter I: Introduction Chapter Overview Statement of the Problem Statement of Purpose Methodology Theoretical Framework/Conceptual Framework Research Questions and Associated Hypotheses Significance of the Study Assumptions of the Study Delimitations of the Study Limitations Definitions of Terms Summary of Rationale Organization of the Dissertation
3	<i>Flush Left, Bold Italic, Title Case Heading</i> All subheadings under the Level 2 subheadings such as the titles of Key Themes in Chapter II: Review of Literature- See example below: Key Themes (Level 2) <i>Critical Thinking (Level 3)</i> <i>The Importance of Teaching Critical Thinking (Level 3)</i> <i>The Common Core and Critical Thinking (Level 3)</i>

	<i>Teaching Critical Thinking (Level 3)</i>
4	Indented, Bold, Title Case Heading, Ending With a Period. The text begins on the same line and continues as a regular paragraph. Problems with Teacher Professional Development. Prior research indicates that one of the problems.....
5	<i>Indented, Bold Italic, Title Case Heading, Ending With a Period.</i> The text begins on the same line and continues as a regular paragraph. See example: <i>Self-Assessment of Teachers' Knowledge of Inquiry-Based Learning.</i> Of the 122 responses collected from the

Se par at e P age

References (Centered, Bold, Title Case Heading)

This heading is centered on a separate continuing page. This page has a listing of all the references cited in the content. The listing is alphabetized following APA format. APA format for each reference has a hanging indent which is an indent that indents all text except for the first line. All reference entries are double spaced and examples for each type of entry can be found at <https://apa.style.apa.org/instructions>. The following example shows correct formatting, capitalization, and punctuation for a journal article.

Lachner, A., Backfisch, I., Hoogerheide, V., van Gog, T., Lachner, A., Backfisch, I.,
Hoogerheide, V., van Gog, T., & Renkl, A. (2020). Timing matters! Explaining between
study phases enhance students' learning. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 112(4), 841–
853. <https://doi.org/10.1037/edu0000396>

Se par at e P age

Appendices (Centered Vertically and Horizontally)

Title Page: The appendix should be preceded by a title page, on which the word Appendices is typed and centered. If appendices are individually identified, a title page should be provided for each, bearing the appropriate identification: Appendix A, etc.

Paper: All pages of the appendix must be on the same kind of paper as used for preparation of the body of the research project. Original letters, questionnaires, testing instruments, etc. should therefore be reproduced onto research project pages.

Margins: The margins of such items must be the same as those prescribed for the body of the research project; oversized text should be reduced on a reducing photocopier to keep items in the appendix within the stated margin requirements. The left margin is especially important.

Format: Items in the appendix such as printed forms, questionnaires, and computer-produced tables may differ in type face and format from the body of the research project, though the appendix title page should not differ. If reproduced documents in the appendix already contain page numbers, the page number for the research project report may be placed into brackets, as close to the center at the bottom of the page as possible.

Criteria for Proposal and Dissertation Defense Presentations

Stated criteria provide standard guidelines for proposal and dissertation defenses to assist students in their preparation for the formal presentations to assigned committee members. All students will use the same Acacia PowerPoint template which is posted in the resource section of the course site. Both presentations must address each section of the dissertation concisely and clearly. The slide order and organization will highlight the progression of the dissertation content and reveal the interconnectedness between sections. Time elements for presentations differ: Proposal Defense is approximately 30 minutes and Dissertation Defense is approximately one hour. Questions may be addressed following the formal presentations.

Each section of the dissertation can be presented in three to four slides maximum with the main significant details, findings, and/or summary of each. A clear title for each slide with bulleted points and/or visuals is preferable. Explanations and details in the slide notes may be added to assist the presenter. A variety of fonts, colors, animations, and pictures should only be used to add emphasis, build interest, or add visual effects without detracting from the content message.

Criteria for Professional PowerPoint Presentations

Fonts

- Titles - 32 point minimum
- Text in bulleted lists - 20 point minimum

Colors

- High contrast for rooms with ambient light
- Use Acacia Template

Text

- Slides should be an outline of talk – not every word you plan to say.
- Place the whole talk in speaker notes only.
- Keep to 6 lines per slide – 6 words to line maximum except for slides that have research questions and hypotheses.
- Full-text quotations are acceptable, otherwise, no full sentences.
- Delete articles (the, a, an).
- If concepts can be illustrated with images/visuals, use them instead of words.
- Talk points should expand on each slide's content.

Citations

- Credit the author, date, and title of the article and journal on the slide in small print at the bottom (18 pt. acceptable for citations only) when reporting research results.
- List main references on the last slide in APA format and state the total number of titles next to the main title of this slide. No more than ten references should be listed on this slide. (See example in the last section of this criteria.)
- www.MDConsult.com is not a reference. Cite the author, date title of the book, journal, article, or monograph, with the date and then the URL following APA format (See Owl Purdue: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html for APA)

Animation

- Animation should enhance, not distract.
- Animation should not make the presentation run long.
- Use subtle animation to show concepts, sequence, or focus audience but only if timed. Use the same transition between all slides.

PPP Size

- Keep posted PowerPoint file size below 1.4 M. Large files will crash laptops with dial-up or on wireless.
- Compress all images in a slide presentation to web format.

Handouts

- Tables, references, examples, etc. may be viewed on a separate screen as an addendum to the slide presentation.

Presentation

- Maintain eye contact with the audience, not with the computer screen or speaker notes.
- Use clear and understandable speaking at a reasonable pace with inflection to maintain interest.
- Involve the dissertation audience, if and when appropriate.

Proposal Defense Outline Guide

Each number is a slide. Try not to exceed 30 slides. Some slides will need to be continued, especially the Research Questions. Each slide needs to have a title even if it is continued. You may want to include some of the figures in your slides to explain your conceptual framework. Your professor will assist and give final approval of the presentation before it is emailed to committee members. The slide sequence is as follows:

1. Title Page—Information on your cover page
2. Presentation Overview – (presentation sequence)
 - Problem and Purpose Statements

- Significance of the Study
 - Literature Gap
 - Overview of the Theoretical Foundation and Conceptual Framework
 - Key Themes
 - Methodology
 - Research Design
 - Research Questions and Hypotheses
 - Population Descriptions and Sampling
 - Training Model Description and Timeline
 - Training Materials
 - Data Collection Instruments and Analysis
 - Assumptions, Limitations and Delimitations
3. Problem Statement
 4. Purpose Statement
 5. Significance of the Study
 6. Literature Gap
 7. Overview of the Theoretical Framework
 8. Overview of Conceptual Framework
 9. Key Themes: Very Brief Summary – Only Bulleted Items from Table of Contents
 10. Methodology
 - Identify if the methodology you selected is qualitative or quantitative
 - State why this selected methodology is the best methodology for your study topic and problem statement
 - Provide citations ((s) from articles/books on methodology to support statements
 11. Research Design
 - State why this is the best design for your topic and problem statement
 - Provide citation(s) from articles/books on research design to support statements
 12. Research Questions: Qualitative
 13. Research Questions: Quantitative and Hypotheses
 14. Population Descriptions and Sampling Method
 15. Training Model Description (includes setting and timeframe)
 16. Training Materials
 17. Data Collection and Instrumentation
 18. Data Collection and Management
 19. Proposed Data Analysis
 20. Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations- (three slides)
 - It is important to carefully define these three items. They involve considering factors that may make your study doable or not doable.
 - List assumptions (things you assume are true)

- Delimitations (Boundaries you set which often result in limitations)
- Limitations (things which pre-exist which limit your research)
- Note: Since assumptions and delimitations often lead to limitations, show limitations last.

21. Major References – Include the total number of references for the proposal and list in APA format the most important references. This is the last slide of your presentation. Even though this is number 21, you will probably have about 28-30 slides with some of the continuous slides.

Dissertation Defense Outline Guide

Each number is a slide. Try not to exceed 40 slides. Some proposal slides will need to be revised based on dissertation findings. Major information and findings from Chapters IV and V are added to the existing proposal defense. However, some of the proposal slides can be deleted and/or revised to provide a smooth transition to added slides. Each slide needs to have a title even if it is continued. Your professor will assist and give final approval of the presentation before it is emailed to committee members. The slide sequence is provided below.

1. Title Slide
2. Presentation Overview (presentation sequence)
3. Statement of Problem
4. Statement of Purpose
5. Overview of the Theoretical Foundation and
6. Conceptual Framework and Training Model
7. Review of Literature – Major Key Themes
8. Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations
9. Design and Methodology
10. Methodology
11. Research Design
12. Research Questions
13. Data Collection
14. Data Analysis
15. Analysis and Interpretation
16. RQ1 and Findings
17. RQ2 and Findings
18. RQ3 and Findings (Add more slides for additional RQs)
19. Hypotheses
20. Conclusions
21. Implications
22. Recommendations for Researchers, Practitioners and Policymakers
23. Major References – Include the total number of references for the proposal and list in APA format the most important references. This is the last slide of your presentation. Even though this is number 23, you will probably have about 35-40 slides with some of the continuous slides.

Sample PowerPoint Templates- Posted in Resources



Title

Date

Doctoral Candidate's Name

Committee Chair:

Committee Members:

Copyright Date - Name
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Presentation Overview

See Guidelines for Proposal or Defense Presentation

Copyright Date - Name
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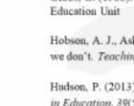
Slide Title

See Guidelines for Proposal or Defense Presentation

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Main References

Total References: 211

Aspfors, J., & Fransson, G. (2015). Research on mentor education for mentors of newly qualified teachers: A qualitative meta-synthesis. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 48, 75–86. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2015.02.004>

Cowan, J. (2014). Noteworthy matters for attention in reflective journal writing. *Active Learning in Higher Education*, 15(1), 53–64.

Gibbs, G. (1988). *Learning by doing: A guide to teaching and learning methods*. Oxford: Oxford Polytechnic, Further Education Unit

Hobson, A. J., Ashby, P., Malderez, A., & Tomlinson, P. D. (2009). Mentoring beginning teachers: What we know and what we don't. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 25(1), 207–216. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2008.09.001>

Hudson, P. (2013). Mentoring as professional development: 'growth for both' mentor and mentee. *Professional Development in Education*, 39(5), 771–783. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19415257.2012.749415>

Kolb, D. A. (1984). *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall. p. 41

Mezirow, J. (1991). *Transformative dimensions of adult learning*. Jossey-Bass, 350 Sansome Street, San Francisco, CA 94104-1310.

Pennanen, M., Bristol, L., Wilkinson, J., & Heikkinen, H. L. (2016). What is 'good' mentoring? Understanding mentoring practices of teacher induction through case studies of Finland and Australia. *Pedagogy, Culture & Society*, 24(1), 27–53.

Schön, D. A. (1983). *The reflective practitioner: How professionals think in action* (1st ed.). New York, NY: New York Basic Books.

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Appendices

APPENDICES

Table of Contents Sample

Understanding the Literature Review

Sample Literature Review and Matrices

APA Citations and References

APA Instructional Aids

Tense Guide for All Dissertation Content

Proposal and Dissertation Rubric

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The sample Table of Contents on the following pages follows the recommended sequence. Add page numbers, Themes, and Appendix titles as needed.

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Table 6. Title

(Continue with Table # Title as sequenced in dissertation)

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Figure 2. Title

Figure 3. Title

Figure 4. Title

Figure 5. Title

(Continue with Figure # Title as sequenced in dissertation)

Understanding the Literature Review

Literature Review Introduction and Directions

For posting the first week of a course:

A literature review is required for this course. During the next couple of weeks, think about a topic. You will submit your topic in Week 3 for approval by the Professor or Learning Coach. Your topic must be related to current trends, issues, and/or policies and their impact on curriculum, instruction, or assessment. All references must be current (within the last five years). Use the Library and Information Resources Network (LIRN), the Acacia online library, by clicking on the home button.

- You may select one of the following topics or another topic of your interest:
- Market analysis
- Global Business strategy
- Business Leadership
- Customer or employee satisfaction
- Business data analysis

Your rough draft will be posted in week 10 for peer review and your complete, revised literature review will be due in Week 11.

What is a literature review?

A literature review is exactly what the term indicates: a review of literature. In this case, the “literature” will be the books, journal articles, and research papers that discuss aspects of the topics of this course. The emphasis will be on the research findings regarding the topic. The “review” explains two aspects. The first is the process that you use and the second is the summary of what you have found. Think of it as completing a “scan” of the topic to see what information is available to readers.

Another way to think about it is as a summary of previous research on a topic. It can be part of a larger report of a research project or a separate explanation. This literature will stand alone as your presentation regarding the topic. Some questions that may guide your thinking as you develop your literature review:

- What is known about the subject?
- Are there any gaps in the knowledge of the subject?
- Who are the significant research personalities in this area?
- Is there consensus about the topic?
- What aspects have generated significant debate on the topic?
- What is the current status of research in this area?
- What sources of information or data were identified that might be useful to you?

As part of your literature review, you need to cover the major findings on the topic, but it will not be necessary to try to identify all research on the subject.

What is the purpose of a literature review?

The purpose of a literature review is to summarize the knowledge and ideas that have been established about a topic. It will allow you to become informed about a specific aspect of a topic that is studied in this course and to demonstrate in-depth knowledge about it. The literature review also will provide practice for the portfolio project you will complete as a conclusion to the program. A literature review is an important section of the portfolio project.

What is the process for completing a literature review?

The first step in the process is to identify the topic and define your research question. If the question is too broad, you will find too many resources. If the question is too narrow, you will find too few resources. Finding the “just right” question is the most difficult part of the literature review.

Start with a question that you may have thought about before or a question that occurs to you as you read and discuss the content of the course. You may identify several questions or aspects of a topic and are unsure which one to choose. Think about what keywords you would use to research each of the questions. You may want to run brief tests by checking the quality and number of resources that are accessed by various keywords. Beginning with several keywords and phrases will make your efforts more effective. This also is the time to consult your Learning Coach to identify the pros and cons of each question for study so you can finalize your choice. The next step is to conduct the research by accessing the resources. Some resources may be too old to be useful in understanding the topic. Usually, resources should be within the last 10 years, except for topics that have a strong, ongoing research history. Those resources may provide a solid explanation of the topic over a period of time. It is important to determine the areas of agreement on the topic. If most of the resources present a perspective viewpoint, that should be noted. If one or two recent researchers have a different viewpoint, that should be described because that may signify a new direction regarding the topic.

You need to protect yourself from plagiarism during this part of the process. You may want to use a t-chart or other organizer to record the ideas from each resource. It is not acceptable to copy sections of the resource and include them in the literature review as individual parts of the document. The key information from each resource should be recorded and then all the ideas should be organized to present a synthesis of your resources. For example, the t-charts from several resources may have a perspective regarding the topic. You then write paragraphs that show how those ideas relate to each other. One person may have identified an important aspect several years ago and other researchers tested the aspect and explained it further.

The resources should be cited after you have explained an idea to show who originated the idea. If the general business community accepts the idea, it is not necessary to cite all the resources. A complete bibliography should be included so make certain that you record the location of your resources.

What is the format?

Formats can vary for a literature review according to the [discipline](#). The following format is suggested for this course:

- Cover page

- Table of Contents
- Introduction with a statement of the question
- Body of the Literature review
- Summary and conclusions
- Bibliography/references

Examples of literature reviews are included in the resources. The examples may not relate to this course, your program, or research but demonstrate the format and content of a typical literature review.

Literature Review Overview

Presentation by Dr. Lopez, Explaining the pieces of a literature review and tips for success.



**Literature Review
Overview**
Dr. Cynthia Lopez

Link to Lit Review Site: <https://sites.google.com/acacia.edu/acaciauniversityresources/home?authuser=0>

Presentation Content

[Plagiarism](#) (steps to avoid)

[Planning Milestones](#)

[Format](#)

[Sample Title Page](#)

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University Courses](#)

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[Literature Review Introduction](#)

[Paragraphs and Synthesis](#)

[Paragraph Writing](#)

[Body Paragraph Example](#)

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2



Plagiarism

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According to the Merriam-Webster online dictionary, to "plagiarize" means:

- to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own
- to use (another's production) without crediting the source
- to commit literary theft
- to present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source
- **Plagiarism Checkers:** [Grammarly](#) and [Easybib](#)

Refer to [the Link](#) for more information

Literature Review Planning Milestones



Literature Review Format

- Title Page
- Table of Contents
- Introduction: Clear background information/ establishes purpose, and engages reader with relevance or provides statement of the question
- Body of the Literature Review: Synthesized paragraphs with transitions, all sources cited, relevance clearly explained through themes/ topics as **level headings**
- Summary: Summarize your research based on the main ideas/concepts and the general importance of the topic as it relates to current research
- Conclusion: Draw your conclusions by providing an analysis that is thought provoking based on the research. Provide appropriate insights and implications for practice or research
- References: Use APA format Owl Purdue shows reverse indenting and double spaced

Myers, M., Paiz, J., Anelli, E., Wagner, J., Lawrick, E., Moore, K., Anderson, M., & Keck, R. (2019, December 20). General format. Purdue Online Writing Lab.
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/fresearch_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/general_fonn.html

Literature Review Formatting Help

- APA 7th Edition Paper Set-up Guide
- Acacia University Rubric
- References: At least ten - eight from current references- (within the last five years), use scholarly journals, books, research articles, avoid blogs
- Sample Student Paper Annotated APA 7th Edition

+a1

APA 7th Edition Title Page

NO RUNNING HEAD

Page
Number

Use of Rubrics to Increase Student Learning in
Middle School

JaneL. Doe

Department, Division,
University Name

Course Name

Instructor

Due Date

Author's name
centered, not bold
not italic. One blank
double spaced line
after the title

Title is bold,
centered and
positioned in the
upper half of the
title page, 3 or 4
lines from the
upper margin)

+all

Table of Contents- Example

Level 1 and Level 2

Headings are to be
included

Indent Level 2

Headings.

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Introduction

Introduction with statement of the question

Research Question (RQ) with claim

Example: Research has found/ reflects/ indicates/ supports...that x and y are true/ not true about the RQ or objective of your review.

D How is technology professional development for elementary teachers impacting digital integration in their classrooms?

D Current research supports that technology professional development for elementary teachers is not impacting.....

+11

Introduction

Selected topic is meaningful, clearly defined and addresses a needed area in the field. Specific question or topic guiding the literature review is identified, clear, and linked to the rationale for the selected topic **(Exceptional - 10 Points)**

Therefore the introduction should:

- define your topic and provide an appropriate context for reviewing the literature;
- establish your reasons- i.e. point of view – for reviewing the literature;
- explain the organization – i.e. sequence – of the review;
- state the scope of the review – i.e. what is included and what isn't included.

+11

Body Paragraph Writing

Insightfully synthesizes the literature, all sources cited, relevance clearly explained through themes/ topics (**Exceptional - 10 points**)

- Use past tense or present perfect tense when discussing other researchers' works.
- Present tense is used if the research is in the current year.
- Examples: Past Perfect - has suggested, Past-suggested
Present - suggest(s)

Topic sentence, supporting evidence, sum up and link to next idea in each body paragraph. Your paragraph should be at least four no longer than eight sentences.

BACK

Body Paragraphs- Synthesizing

Insightfully synthesizes the literature, all sources cited, relevance clearly explained through themes/topics (**Exceptional - 10 points**)

X

Composed of ideas and concepts from the collection of references

Has connections between sources through comparisons/contrasts of ideas, results, or trends

Not a paragraph summary for each article connected to another paragraph summary of another article

Body Paragraph Example

Topic
sentence

Supporting
Evidence

Researchers typically state that the principle of motivation is valid, but its implications vary. On this theory, there has been a general consensus as evidenced in the research by White (1987), Brown (1980), and Black (1978). However, Green (1975) sees motivation as a result of a positive working method. Lack (1978) on the other hand designated money as a source of inspiration and neglected the climate. Even though work of Green had some drawbacks in that it failed to take other circumstances into account, its major advantage lies with the fact that his research encouraged further studies

Student
analysis

Sum up and link to the
next idea.

Summary

Clearly summarizes all key points found in the references and gives an accurate account of the content **(Exceptional - 10 points)**

- Shorten the text so that all facts are in the summary
- Read the text again to know what is the main content
- Make notes of details and keywords
- Form your sentences with the keywords
- Sentences should reflect the main content
- First sentence of the summary should reflect the purpose
- Use simple present or simple past
- Check your spelling and punctuation

Conclusion

Succinct and precise conclusions providing appropriate insights and implications for practice or research (**Exceptional - 10 points**)

- Stress the importance of the purpose
- Show why the paper is important and provide meaning and use
- Show how the points you made and examples you used fit together
- Provide implications for further research

+11

References

All in-text citations and listed references are complete and properly formatted in APA style (**Exceptional - 10 points**)

A null, M. A. (2015). The influence of teachers' perceptions of the effect of class size on teaching. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 8(12), 33-42.

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2015.12.013

Bowen, L. B., Magnuson, K. A., Scudler, H. S., & Cao, G. L. (2011). A meta-analysis of class sizes and outcomes in early childhood education programs: Are thresholds of quality associated with greater impacts on cognitive, social, and socioemotional outcomes? *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 39(3), 407-418. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edps.2011.06.009>

Qijiang, L. (2011). The false promise of class-size reduction. *ERIC Education Resources*.
Information Center

Filges, T., Sow, L., Soudil, C. S., & Nielsen, B. C. V. (2018). Small class sizes for improving student achievement in primary and secondary schools: A systematic review.

Child Development, 14(1), 1-107. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.12901>



Literature Review Checklist

Requirements

Have you...

- ☐ Selected appropriate, current and credible (academic/scholarly) sources?
- ☐ Introduced the purpose and scope of the review?
- ☐ Analyzed and synthesized the research for relationships and/or opposing viewpoints?
- ☐ Used a plagiarism checker to ensure proper paraphrasing and APA in-text citations?
- ☐ Used clearly articulated transitions to connect sections of the review?
- ☐ Identified gaps in the literature and research?
- ☐ Identified areas for further research?
- ☐ Included the different sections: Title Page, Table of Contents, Introduction, Body, Summary and Conclusion and References?
- ☐ Checked grammar, punctuation and spelling?
- ☐ Recorded the reference details of the sources in APA format?

I have reviewed the checked items on the list to ensure that my literature review meets the requirements before submission.

Name _____ Date _____

(Upload this document with your final literature review.)

— ||

Formal APA Writing Style

No errors in APA font, spacing and format (order of pages, title page, margins, headings, and paragraphing) **(Exceptional - 10 points)**

- Use active voice when possible- For example, instead of It was found that... you could try Bandura discovered or The results showed that
- Use past tense or present perfect tense when discussing other researchers' works-Bandura discovered or Researchers have discovered
- Avoid personal references- pronouns I, we, us, you, me ...
- Use acronyms only after previously spelling the full name
- No slang and contractions
- Fully developed paragraphs with supporting detail – no three sentence paragraphs
- Avoid opinions and /or personal reactions unless supported with citations
- Ampersands(&) only for in-text citations enclosed in parentheses

— ||



Literature Review Rubric for Acacia University Courses

Literature Review Rubric

Content 70%

- Introduction
- Body and Synthesis
- Body Analysis
- Summary
- Conclusion
- Organization
- Coverage

APA Guidelines 20%

- Format
- References

Grammar Usage and Mechanics 10%

- Grammar Usage and Mechanics

Content: Body Synthesis

Criteria	Exceptional- 10	Satisfactory - 8-9	Standard - 5-7	Unacceptable - 1-4	Missing - 0
Content Body Synthesis	Insightfully synthesizes the literature, all sources cited, relevance clearly explained through the most topics	Synthesis not strong, most sources cited with reliance on summaries, lacks comparisons or connections	Presents a string of article summaries, with little and/or no comparisons or connections	Misinterpretation of information, and some sources do not support the synthesis of content	No synthesis provided

Content Introduction

Criteria	Exceptional - 10	Satisfactory - 8-g	Standard - 5-7	Unacceptable- 1-4	Missing - 0
Content Body Analysis	Clearly explained analysis with supporting examples, identifies gaps or limitations of current research and recommends next research steps	Limited analysis, few supporting examples, lacks explanation of gaps or limitations of current research, or recommendations for next research steps	Incomplete analysis, does not clearly identify gaps or limitations of current research or no recommendations for next research steps	Missing significant analysis components, either does not identify gaps or limitations of current research and/or recommendations for next research steps	No analysis provided

+a1|

23

Content: Body Analysis

Criteria	Exceptional- 10	Satisfactory - 8-g	Standard -5-7	Unacceptable - 1-4	Missing - 0
Content Body Analysis	Clearly explained analysis with supporting examples, identifies gaps or limitations of current research and recommends next research steps	Limited analysis, few supporting examples, lacks explanation of gaps or limitations of current research, or recommendations for next research steps	Incomplete analysis, does not clearly identify gaps or limitations of current research or no recommendations for next research steps	Missing significant analysis components, either does not identify gaps or limitations of current research and/or recommendations for next research steps	No analysis provided

24

Content: Summary

Criteria	Exceptional - 10	Satisfactory - 8-9	Standard - 5-7	Unacceptable - 1-4	Missing - 0
Content Summary	Clearly summarizes all key points found in the references and gives an accurate account of the content	The summary has some key points and gives an accurate account of the content.	The summary has a few key points, gives some account of the content and/or is brief and redundant.	The summary refers to content but does not list key points and gives minimal account of the content resulting in brevity.	No summary

+a11

25

Content: Conclusion

Criteria	Exceptional - 10	Satisfactory - 8-9	Standard - 5-7	Unacceptable - 1-4	Missing - 0
Content Conclusion	Succinct and precise conclusions providing appropriate insights and implications for practice or research	Concluding remarks show that analysis and synthesis of ideas occurred; however, some conclusions not supported in content.	Brief and/or redundant conclusion related to topic but with very limited details and implications	Concluding paragraph has unrelated aspects of topic and/or details are not supported in content.	No conclusion



26

Content: Organization

Criteria	Exceptional - 10	Satisfactory - 8-g	Standard - 5-7	Unacceptable- 1-4	Missing - 0
Content Organization	Evident organization, transitions, sentences and paragraphing provide ease of reading for understanding.	Few errors in organization, transitions, sentences and paragraphing	Some errors in organization, transitions, sentences and paragraphing	Many errors in organization, transitions, sentences and paragraphing	No organization is evident, difficult to read for understanding

+a11

27

Content: Coverage

Criteria	Exceptional - 10	Satisfactory - 8-g	Standard - 5-7	Unacceptable- 1-4	Missing - 0
Content Coverage	All content covered in depth without being redundant, has at least 10 or more scholarly references with at least ten being less than five years old	Includes all major sections, not covered in as much depth with 10 or more scholarly references, though less than ten being less than five years old	Includes some major sections of pertinent content with fewer than 10 scholarly references and/or some are more than five years old	Major sections of pertinent content have been omitted with less than 10 references and an over reliance on low quality sources.	No description of content of articles with less than ten references with an over reliance on low quality sources



APA Guidelines

Criteria	Exceptional - 10	Satisfactory - 8-9	Standard - 5-7	Unacceptable - 1-4	Missing - 0
Content Coverage	All content covered in depth without being redundant, has at least 10 or more scholarly references with at least ten being less than five years old	Includes all major sections, not covered in as much depth with 8 or more scholarly references, though less than ten being less than five years old	Includes some major sections of pertinent content with fewer than 10 scholarly references and/or some are more than five years old	Major sections of pertinent content have been omitted with less than 10 references and an over reliance on low quality sources.	No description of content of articles with less than ten references with an over reliance on low quality sources



29

Grammar, Usage and Mechanics

Criteria	Exceptional - 10	Satisfactory - 8-9	Standard - 5-7	Unacceptable - 1-4	Missing - 0
Grammar Usage and Mechanics	No grammar, usage, punctuation and/or spelling errors	Few grammar, usage, punctuation and/or spelling errors	Some grammar, usage, punctuation and/or spelling errors	Many grammar, usage, punctuation and/or spelling errors	Disregard for grammar, usage, punctuation, and/or spelling rules

+all

30

Sample Literature Review and Matrices

Sample Literature Review

Class Size Reduction Efforts Offer Few Benefits to School ▼

Commented [CL1]: APA recommends that your title be no more than 12 words in length.

Name Last Name

Graduate Studies in Educational Administration, Acacia University

EDA 560: Curriculum, Assessment, and Instruction

Dr. Cynthia Lopez

April 14, 2020

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Size Reduction Efforts Offer Few Benefits to Schools

Introduction

There has been a long-standing popular belief that class size has a direct influence on student performance. Smaller classes, many argue, help students find academic success, especially those who struggle or those who are considered most "at risk." It is commonly believed that small class sizes enhance student learning because the specialized needs of each student can be better addressed through more individualized, innovative and flexible teaching methods. Furthermore, by reducing class sizes, it is assumed that students will have more time to interact with one another and receive quick and robust feedback from their teachers (Pow & Wong, 2017). While the first studies on this topic showed evidence to support that on average this is true, current studies have identified flaws in the earlier work that discredits many of the claims. Newer research disputes the notion that class size is as important to students' academic success as the research stemming from 1985 projects suggested that it was. Recent studies have indicated that in several cases, smaller class sizes have no impact, or even sometimes a declining impact on academic success, which is contradictory to the initial research that fueled legislative action that still influences schools today (Harfitt, 2016). This literature review examines the sentiments of current researchers on the impact of class size on academic achievement.

Review of the Literature

This literature review presents how original findings contributed to, if not created, perceptions about the importance of class size on academic success. These perceptions, based on information from over thirty years ago, have continued to influence the decisions of policy-makers, despite conflicting evidence. Continuing research on the insignificant impact of class

Commented (C13): In the introduction purpose

Research question

RQ will claim

Example: biao fDund/illleclo/illdicaea/
illlePOfla..illit"mdy nina/ not truabout tlutRQ
or objectiv of 7"lf review.

Commented (C14): Purpose statement

Commented (C15): Brief Intro – brief discussion of
the theme: Topia

size reduction efforts has provoked questions adding to the ever-popular debate regarding class size: Is influential on a student's academic success as many, including teachers, believe? Are there actualized benefits to schools? If so, what are they? Various sources were examined for relevance and the respective research is sectioned into three themes which emerged while conducting the review.

Historical Context

Three studies conducted between 1985-2005 are linked to much of what has become a popular belief about the importance of class size, as effectively summarized in the report by 'Watson et al. (2013). These influential bodies of research, the Student-Teacher Achievement Ratio (STAR) project, the Student Achievement Guarantee in Education (SAGE) project, and the California Class Size Reduction Program (CSR), all claimed to find increases in student achievement when class sizes were reduced. Harfitt (2016) believes that these studies, fueled in his opinion by politics, led to the consensus that smaller classes are one of the most effective means of improving student achievement. According to him, this consensus prompted the development of misguided policies, resulting in widespread class size reduction efforts across the U.S. and other countries, which may have done more harm than good. Pilge et al. (2018) expanded on the efforts of Harfitt's work by summarizing and analyzing findings from 148 reports about the impact of reducing class sizes in 41 different countries.

Between the years of 2000 and 2009 in particular, several countries, including the U.S., revamped educational policy and suggested that schools apply significant financial and capital resources to decrease class sizes. The enormous impact these studies had on educational policy-makers and school funding was monumental. Take for example in 1999, the federal budget

- 1 Commented [CL6]: Enriching rhetorical questions
- 1 Commented [CL7]: Organizational 11-1 don

Body Paragraph 1

Composed of ideas and concepts from the collection of references

Has connections between sources through comparisons/contrasts of ideas, results, or trends

Not a plagiarized work (or is it?)

Summary of a

included \$12 billion of incentives to reduce class sizes, and during the 2006-07 school year, California alone spent \$1.7 billion to cap elementary classes at 20 students. Furthermore, P and Jackson's (2013), research indicated that institutions that made efforts to reduce class sizes reported a negligible impact on academic success and many later abandoned their focus on establishing small classes. Schools found that in general, the average effects were minimal, with the occasional experience of positive effects on reading achievement; most found either no effect or negative effects with class size reduction in math classes. Similarly, compiled findings from The Research Services Information Capsule for Miami Dade (2010) supported that CSR has had some impact on student achievement particularly in the primary grades. However, their research found that "the effects may be small and the optimism of educators regarding CSR should be tempered with the real world problems to which it is directly and indirectly associated" (2010, p. 6).

Conflicting Evidence

that the majority of class size studies and their respective findings are not very rigorous. He warned that policymakers need to scrutinize the evidence very carefully in using it as a guide in implementing and monitoring class size reduction. In supporting this warning, stressed that "the primary difficulty in studying class size is that schools with different class sizes likely differ in many other, difficult-to-observe" (p. 1). For example, schools with more money and resources can afford to have smaller classes, which may indicate that this is better but one also needs to consider family affluence and resources as the main reason. On the other hand, some schools with behavior problems may also have students in small classes to manage behavior. In this case, it is a behavior issue rather than a learning issue (2011).

Commented [CL91]: Direct quote – I think than 40 words.

Commented [CL101]: Theme

Commented [CL111]: Chinaos (2011) is not needed at the end of quote because of the, r-uns (Ho, ho) that are made after the first sentence.

Furthermore, recent studies have produced findings opposite of what STAR, SAGE, and CSRP reported. University of California's (Kane et al., 2013) presented information that fully contradicts previous reports that had shown a positive correlation between class size reduction and a student's academic success. Their study explained the possibility of small academic gains for disadvantaged and younger students, but aside from that, they did not see any academic gains resulting from class size reduction across other student groups. They surmised that advantages to having small classes only increased with student and teacher motivation. When comparing class size reduction efforts against contextual and easily controlled factors, bigger benefits were seen from almost any other initiative. Elements such as teacher pay, recruitment and retention of highly qualified and successful teachers, and building additional planning time into teachers' schedules were discovered to have much larger influence on a student's academic success than a simple reduction in class size. Moreover, their literature, as well as that from Shen and Konstantopoulos (2019), found multinational evidence detailing instances where smaller class sizes were sometimes detrimental to student performance, especially in the case of math and science courses.

Some researchers, such as Fow and Wong (2017) and Page and Jackson (2013), voiced concerns over the reliability and validity of the early research. Previous studies' definition of "success" had been restricted to the use of non-uniform standardized test scores, which is limited in scope. Additionally, they complained about small sample sizes that focused primarily on "at-risk" groups who typically had low achievement, such as minorities and children from low-income families. According to them, "at-risk" populations have special needs that are usually addressed by a variety of different programs, none of which were taken into consideration by CSRP when evaluating the impact of class size. (Kane et al., 2013) voiced

skepticism as well and recognized that while the prior work intended to determine whether or not reductions in class size improved student achievement, they were not designed to look at a number of other factors or question the "how" or "why" smaller class sizes affected students. He further explained how subsequent research projects expanded their observations beyond "at-risk" populations and attempted to address the "how" and "why". According to Harfitt, several of the researchers involved in the "how" and "why" studies openly admitted that it was incredibly difficult to pinpoint the true impact of class size on student achievement. They discovered that questions about which students benefit and the specific ways in which they benefit are tough to answer as it is impossible to remove all contributing factors. For example, special programming is regularly offered to struggling learners, as well as smaller classes, making it challenging for researchers to ascertain the bigger influence (Harfitt, 2016; Page & Jackson, 2013; Pow & Wong, 2017). Despite challenges to create ideal study conditions, Page and Jackson (2013) observed groups separately and found evidence showing that small class sizes yielded the highest test-score gain among high-achieving children, not the "at-risk" or struggling learners as previously stated in earlier studies.

The report by Filges et al. (2018) illustrated the opposing viewpoints of current researchers and their predecessors, citing recent evidence that suggests reducing class sizes has few, if any, benefits. Their compilation of data argued that the effects of class size reduction efforts are modest and that there are better strategies for improving student success, such as focusing on relationships and teacher quality. Shen and Konstantopoulos' (2019) work corroborated the reports from recent researchers whose opinions seemed to be at odds with the prior research such as the "across-the-board reductions in class size at the state level are like 'a little disappointing results, as was the case in California and Florida'" (Chingos, 2011, p. 1). Shen

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and Konstantopoulos concluded that much of the existing research into the effects of class size reduction has been remarkably inconclusive, with relatively insignificant benefits to those who initiated large-scale class size reduction efforts. In fact, there is very little disagreement amongst the works reviewed. Pow and Wong (2011) also voiced concerns about the narrow focus and small sample sizes in the earliest studies. Moreover, Page and Jackson (2013) criticized the lack of reliable data from STAR, SAGE and CSRP that was used to substantiate overreaching claims of positive impacts on achievement by reducing class sizes.

Teacher-Driven Impact

One of the most commonly perceived merits of small class sizes assumes that with smaller numbers, teachers will adjust teaching strategies to devote more time and effort to students' individual needs. Pow and Wong (2017) argued against the idea that teachers would better address individual differences in the classroom with class size reductions. According to them, seizing the opportunities that small class sizes can provide is entirely up to the individual discretion of a teacher. Upon review of schools who engaged in class size reduction initiatives, it was found that even when provided with the opportunity to manage fewer students, most teachers did not seek room for implementation. In fact, few utilized the opportunity to build student engagement or create meaningful relationships, thus the desired academic gains were never actualized. Their research, as well as that from Bowne et al. (2017), initially attempted to lay credence to the claims that lower child-teacher ratios actually afforded students more one-on-one time with their teachers, offered teachers increased opportunities to understand each student, and created time to implement activities unique to each student's needs. However, the findings were opposite of what was expected. It was discovered that in reality, a large percentage of teachers did not alter their instructional methods when given smaller classes.

What they found was that the theoretical aspect of class size reduction is not necessarily evident in its application.

Though smaller class sizes may offer the potential to make classroom management easier in the ways of minimizing distractions and increasing opportunities for teachers to focus on sound instructional strategies, there is no clear-cut evidence to demonstrate that happens.

Gary Hart's (2016) book, *Classroom Size Matters: Why Smaller Classes Work*, offered first-hand accounts of substantiated evidence that classroom size had very little to do with teacher effectiveness. Throughout his work, he cited examples of instances where teachers with fewer than 18 students are less effective than those with upwards of 60. His points aligned with the claims made by numerous meta-analyses: class size has a lesser impact on student success than originally thought, and overall teacher quality matters more. In fact, based on his research on the cost effectiveness of class size reduction, Chingos (2011) offered his advice on implementing policies at the district level by working with principals on their specific needs. These efficiency type decisions were made after reviewing student needs and teacher quality. He stated that

)An even better approach would be to let individual schools use small classes as a response to very specific circumstances. An individual principal may decide, for example, that a smaller class makes sense for an inexperienced teacher who needs support in developing skills managing a classroom with several students with behavior problems. At the same time, the principal may want to assign a larger class to a highly effective veteran teacher, perhaps with some extra pay to compensate the teacher for the extra work required (2011, p. 10).

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Factors contributing to class size reduction decisions such as cost, student needs and teacher quality should also be considered in the comparison of studies (Bowe et al., 2017; Chingos, 2011; Harfitt, 2011). These factors need to be considered in the evaluation of teacher driven impact regarding class size reduction.

In a more recent study by Mohammed Almulla (2015), teachers' perceptions of class size were evaluated alongside their student data on academic growth and total number of classroom management incidents. The study showed that the majority of participating teachers all believed that class size had some degree of impact on their overall effectiveness as an instructor. Important to note was that teachers with large class sizes, as well as those with small classes, reported having a limited ability to use their full range of skills. Regardless of the class size, teachers were observed to rely on more teacher-centered instructional methods, as opposed to student-centered methods that are known to produce better academic outcomes for students. Teachers expressed concerns about heavy workloads, inadequate planning time, and difficulties managing classrooms in light of student behavior and rated those criteria as their biggest barriers to increasing student success. Similar to what was found in other studies, even when class sizes were reduced for the teachers in this study, teaching strategies remained the same and student academic gains were unnoticed.

Summary

Across the world, irrespective of subject and grade level, smaller class sizes are typically desired, especially by parents and teachers. With smaller class sizes, it is commonly believed that teachers can better maintain control and provide more individualized attention to their students (Shen & Konstantopoulos, 2019). Filges et al. (2018) points out that using class size reduction techniques as a means to increase student achievement is an approach that has been

repeatedly attempted, regularly debated, and discussed for decades. Historic and present-day educational reforms, school policies, and teaching strategies have evolved (and revolved) from the perceived benefits of class size reduction. Though several studies reviewed reported that teachers believe that small class size largely contributes to a student's academic success, they also found that in general, teachers are not apt to change their teaching practices despite a reduction in their class sizes. Moreover, recent studies have gathered data that seem to be at odds with the findings in prior work, claiming that the previous bodies of research that led to widespread class size reduction efforts failed to adequately identify substantial educational benefits (Mulla, 2015; Bowne et al., 2017; Harfitt 2016; Jow & Votg, 2017). Shen and Konstantopoulos (2019) further concluded that much of the existing research into the effects of class size reduction has been remarkably inconclusive, with relatively insignificant benefits to those who implemented class size reduction efforts. All in all, the reviewed research held common opinions that results from early research were not credible, believing the studies to be flawed with ambiguity and inconsistencies that lacked strong empirical evidence to support their claims of benefits in reducing class sizes. Additional consensus was that academic success is linked to far more than just a simple reduction in class size (Tai-fitt 2016; Pag & Jacksoll 2011; Pow & Wong, 2017).

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Conclusion

The impact of class size on student success has been a fiercely debated topic for years. In fact, it has often become the premise for policy development and the rationale behind adjustments to educational funding. As evidenced throughout this literature review, decisions made to reduce class sizes were based upon information from studies whose validity of evidence has been questioned for the past several years. An expanding body of newer research indicates

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that class size may not be as important on students' academic gain as the earlier researchers claimed. Startling to many was the discovery that current literature suggests that small class size, at best, has a negligible impact on academic achievement (Filges et al., 2018). In keeping with this argument, the Research Information Services Capsule concluded "that although educational researchers have not definitively agreed upon the effectiveness of CSR, given its almost universal public appeal, there is little doubt it is here to stay in some form" (2010, p. 13).

Watson et al. (2013) authored extensive literature that set the stage for investigation into class size reduction efforts. Their findings were continually and unanimously echoed throughout the work of the later researchers. A large number of contemporary researchers argue against the popular belief that a class size reduction is a smart approach to improving academic performance. Present findings indicate it may actually be an impractical approach, with little evidence of its success at improving students' learning (Filges et al., 2018; Amulla, 2015).

According to the presented research and illustrated via meaningful accounts from Gary Harfitts (2016) sociological experiences, there are better and more cost-effective options to enhance student learning, such as those that revolve around teacher quality and building relationships. In essence, much of modern research has deduced that reducing class sizes was never a successful means of educational enhancement. In theory, it allowed teachers additional opportunities to employ more effective student-focused teaching strategies, but as Almulla (2015) and Bowne et al. (2017) pointed out, such opportunities were rarely utilized to their idealized intent. Ultimately, class size reduction has and will continue to be researched as to its cost effectiveness and improved student achievement. Taken together, these findings are factors that will be weighed in making class size reduction decisions based on cost, student needs and teacher

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Creswell's Recommendation

"Initially, try to locate about 50 reports of research in books or referred articles on your topic. Search the databases that are typically reviewed by social science researchers, such as ERIC, EBSCO, PsycINFO, Sociofile, Social Science Citation Index, Google Scholar, and ProQuest." (Creswell, 2014, p. 64)

Literature Matrix

Master Literature Matrix *tl*

File Edit View Insert Format Data Tools Add-ons Help last edit was made yesterday at 8:44PM by Kim Hill

Year of publication (article, book, dissertation, etc.)

APA Citation

Topic

Quote

Page #

Website (if needed)

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Copy and paste any quotes or big ideas from any readings you find. Hit a direct quote

work on Chapter 2, you will sort column D so that all info will be organized by topic.

include the page number so you don't have to go back and find it later. When you are ready to

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back to it! I need it

Literature Matrix

Summary of Resources
Rule:
1- Copy citation
2- Write article as is No paraphrasing
3- Paraphrase to use in thesis

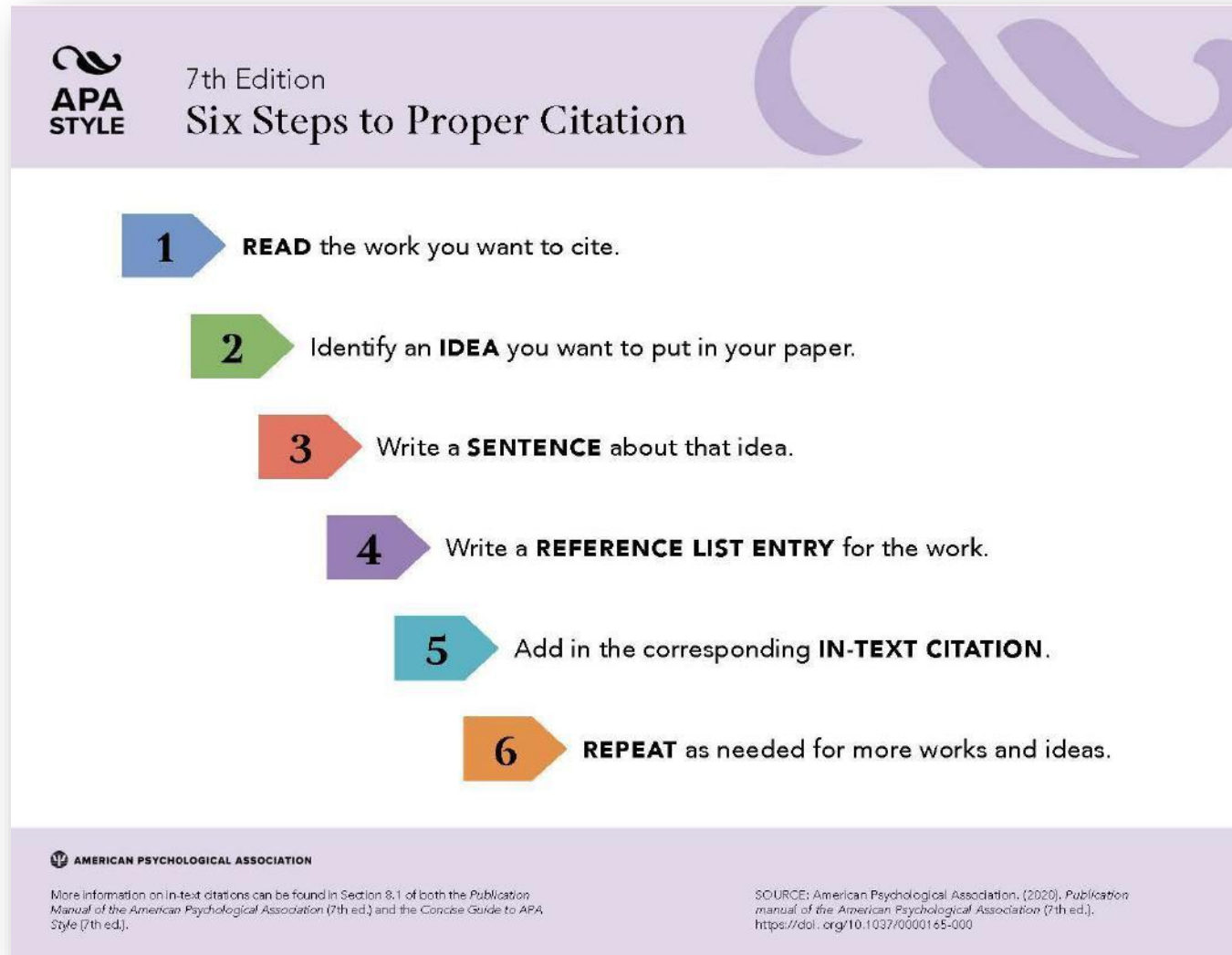
Codes
Reflection Definition Green
Reflection Theory purple
Reflection Tools Yellow
Reflective Practice definition blue

M.ory Brill Postholm (Postholm.2008)

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Capitalize only the first letter of the first word. For a two-part title, capitalize the first word of the second part of the title. Also capitalize proper nouns. Do not italicize. End with a period.

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Author, A. A., & Author, B. B. (Year). Title of the article.

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Capitalize all major words in the periodical name. Follow with a comma. Italicize the periodical name (but not the comma after).

Italicize the volume number. Do not put a space between the volume number and the parentheses around the issue number.

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Include the article page range. Use an en dash; do not put spaces around the en dash. End with a period.

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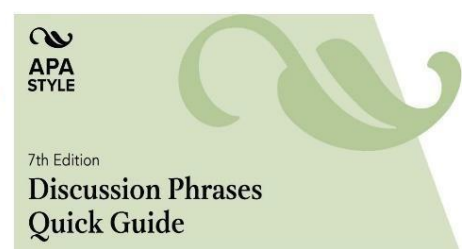
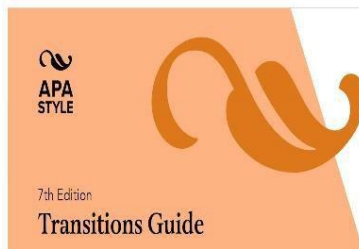
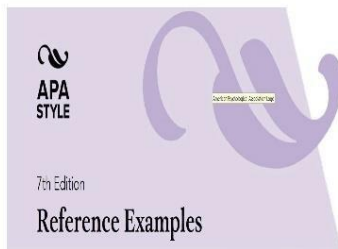
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Tense Guide for All Dissertation Content

Dissertation Sections	General Tenses
Abstract	Present: for facts and general truisms; to say what the paper does Example: The research suggests..... Present perfect: for past events or research still relevant to the present Examples: Scholars have examined ... Other practitioners have suggested
Chapter I	Present Tense: Introductions and Summaries Past Tense or Present Perfect Tense: Chapter I Proposal Content needs to be revised
Chapter 2	Introductions and Summaries- Present Tense Revise proposal content to past or present perfect tense for the dissertation manuscript Examples: Past: Piaget showed... or Present perfect tense Researchers have shown... Tips: Consistency in tense within a paragraph and throughout the chapter is important. Use only last names for persons/authors/researchers noted in your literature review; do not use position or academic titles. Do not connect summaries of articles. Instead, integrate your sources into synthesized paragraphs. Try to paraphrase instead of having direct quotations linked by transitional sentences. Aim to paraphrase instead of quoting. As stated in the APA 7th Ed (2019), Quoted material is needed only: • “When reproducing an exact definition (see Section 6.22 of the <i>Publication Manual</i>), • when an author has said something memorably or succinctly, or • when you want to respond to exact wording (e.g., something someone said).” Also, avoid citing studies referenced in other studies; instead, find and cite the direct source. For example, not “Sullivan (1999), as cited in (Henderson, 2001);” instead “Sullivan (1999) found...”
Chapter 3	Introductions and Summaries- Present Tense Revise proposal content to past tense for dissertation manuscript
Chapter 4	Introductions and Summaries- Present Tense Content – Past Tense
Chapter 5	Introductions and Summaries- Present Tense Content – Present Tense

Specific Chapter Sections	*Recommended Tense	Example
Literature review (or whenever discussing other researchers' work)	Past	Martin (2020) addressed
	Present perfect	Researchers have studied
Method Description of procedure	Past	Participants took a survey
	Present perfect	Others have used similar approaches
Reporting of your own or other researchers' results	Past	Results showed Scores decreased Hypotheses were not supported
Personal reactions	Past	The researcher felt surprised
	Present perfect	The researcher has experienced
	Present	The researcher believes
Discussion of implications of results or previous statements	Present	The results indicate The findings mean that
Presentation of conclusions, limitations, future directions, and so forth	Present	The researcher concludes Limitations of the study are Future research should explore
Chapter Introductions Chapter Summaries	Present	Chapter I presents Chapter II provides The final section details

Proposal and Dissertation Rubric

Acacia University Action Research Proposal and Dissertation Rubric

Proposal Rubric Components: Content 70%, APA Format 15%, and Grammar/Mechanics 15%
Dissertation Rubric Components: Content 80%, APA Format 10%, and Grammar/Mechanics 10%

Criteria	Exceptional 5 points	Satisfactory 4 points	Substandard 3-2 points	Unacceptable 1 point	Missing 0 points
Chapter I: Introduction 20%/ Proposal and 10%/Dissertation					
Topic, Variables, Purpose, Research Problem and Theoretical Foundation	Has complete descriptions of all the following: topic, quantitative and qualitative variables, purpose, research problem, and theoretical foundation. Theory(s) relevance to the topic is clearly stated. Citations justify theory selection.	Has adequate descriptions of most of the following: topic, quantitative and qualitative variables, purpose, research problem, and theoretical foundation. Theory(s) relevance to the topic is adequate with some citations.	Has vague descriptions for any of the following: topic, quantitative and qualitative variables, purpose, research problem, and theoretical foundation. Theory(s) relevance to the topic is lacking. More citations are needed to justify theory selection.	Has incomplete descriptions of most of the following: topic, quantitative and qualitative variables, purpose, research problem, and theoretical foundation. Theory(s) relevance to the topic is lacking with few citations	No descriptions of the following: topic, quantitative and qualitative variables, purpose, research problem, and theoretical foundation.
Assumptions, Limitations and Delimitations	Has identified at least two related condition statements for each of the following sections: assumptions, limitations, and delimitations. All condition statements are relevant to the research study.	Has identified at least two adequate condition statements for each of the following sections: assumptions, limitations, and delimitations. Most condition statements are relevant to the research study.	Has identified vague condition statements for any of the following sections: assumptions, limitations, and delimitations. Most condition statements are relevant to the research study.	Has an incomplete number of condition statements for any of the following sections: assumptions, limitations, and delimitations.	No related condition statements for each of the following sections: assumptions, limitations, and delimitations.

Chapter II: Literature Review
30% Proposal and 20% Dissertation

Content: Body Synthesis	Insightfully synthesizes the literature, all sources cited, relevance clearly explained through themes/ topics	Synthesis not strong , most sources cited with reliance on summaries, lacks comparisons or connections	Presents a string of article summaries , with little and/or no comparisons or connections	Misinterpretation of information, statements are made and some sources do not support the synthesis of content	No synthesis provided
Content: Body Analysis	Clearly explained analysis with supporting examples, identifies gaps or limitations of current research and recommends next research steps	Limited analysis , few supporting examples, lacks an explanation of gaps or limitations of current research, or recommendations for next research steps	Incomplete analysis , does not identify gaps or limitations of current research or no recommendations for next research steps	Missing significant analysis components, either does not identify gaps or limitations of current research and/or recommendations for the next research steps	No analysis provided
Content: Organization	Evident organization , transitions, sentences, and paragraphing provide ease of reading for understanding	Few errors in organization, transitions, sentences, and paragraphing	Some errors in organization, transitions, sentences, and paragraphing	Many errors in organization, transitions, sentences, and paragraphing	No organization is evident, difficult to read for understanding
Content: Coverage	All content covered in depth without being redundant, has at least 20 or more scholarly references with at least 10 being less than five years old	Includes all major sections, not covered in as much depth with 20 or more scholarly references, though less than 10 being less than five years old	Includes some major sections of pertinent content with fewer than 20 scholarly references and/or some are more than five years old	Major sections of pertinent content have been omitted with less than 20 references and an overreliance on low-quality sources	No description of the content of articles with less than 20 references with an overreliance on low-quality sources

Chapter III: Methodology
20% Proposal and 10% Dissertation

Action Research Design	Has complete descriptions of all the components: research design, specific methods, procedures, action research aspect, and methodology justification (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed) with supporting research. Justification explains why the selected method(s) are the best to answer research questions and address the problem.	Has adequate descriptions of most of the following components: research design, specific methods, procedures, action research aspect, and methodology justification (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed) with supporting research. Justification explains why the selected method(s) are the best to answer research questions and address the problem.	Has vague descriptions for any of the following components: research design, specific methods, procedures, action research aspect, and methodology justification (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed) with supporting research. Justification explains why the selected method(s) are the best to answer research questions and address the problem.	Has incomplete descriptions of the following components: research design, specific methods, procedures, action research aspect, and methodology justification (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed) with supporting research. Justification explains why the selected method(s) are the best to answer research questions and address the problem.	No descriptions of the components: research design, specific methods, procedures, action research aspect, and methodology justification (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed) with supporting research.
Setting, Timeframe, Participants and Training Model/ Interventions	Has complete descriptions explaining how all of the following are related and mutually supported: setting, timeframe, participants, and training model/intervention. Model includes sequential components and plans for participants who may miss parts of training.	Has adequate descriptions explaining how most of the following are related and mutually supported: setting, timeframe, participants, and training model. Model includes sequential components and plans for participants who may miss parts of training.	Has vague descriptions explaining how most of the following are related and mutually supported: setting, timeframe, participants, and training model. Model includes sequential components and lacks plans for participants who may miss parts of training.	Has incomplete descriptions explaining how the following are related and mutually supported: setting, timeframe, participants, and training model. Model includes sequential components and plans for participants who may miss parts of training.	No descriptions for the setting, timeframe, participants, and training model. Model includes sequential components and plans for participants who may miss parts of training.

Chapter IV: Findings and Presentation of Data

20% Dissertation

Data Collection and Instrumentation	Has complete descriptions of the data collection process and procedures including authorizations and detailed steps. Quantitative and qualitative sections have a linear sequence on how each instrument or data source was used and how and where data were collected and recorded.	Has adequate descriptions of the data collection process and procedures including authorizations and detailed steps. Quantitative and qualitative sections have most of the following: linear sequence on how each instrument or data source was used and how and where data were collected and recorded.	Has vague descriptions of the data collection process and procedures that include authorizations and detailed steps. Quantitative and qualitative sections have some of the following: linear sequence on how each instrument or data source was used and how and where data were collected and recorded.	Has incomplete descriptions of the data collection process and procedures. Quantitative and qualitative sections lack most of the following: linear sequence on how each instrument or data source was used and how and where data were collected and recorded.	No descriptions of the data collection process and procedures.
Data Analysis	Has complete descriptions of how the analytic process was conducted for each research question. Quantitative analysis describes the scales (and subscales) of specified instruments and the type of data for each variable. Qualitative analysis describes the process such as coding and theming with clear evidence on how codes moved to themes.	Has adequate descriptions on how the analytic process was conducted for each research question. Quantitative analysis describes the scales (and subscales) of specified instruments and the type of data for each variable. Qualitative analysis describes the process such as coding and theming with clear evidence on how codes moved to themes.	Has vague descriptions of how the analytic process was conducted for each research question. Quantitative analysis vaguely describes the scales (and subscales) of specified instruments and the type of data for each variable. Qualitative analysis vaguely describes the process such as coding and theming with clear evidence of how codes moved to themes.	Has incomplete descriptions on how the analytic process was conducted for each research question. Quantitative analysis lacks a description of the scales (and subscales) of specified instruments and the type of data for each variable. Qualitative analysis lacks a description of the process such as coding and theming with clear evidence of how codes moved to themes.	No descriptions of how the analytic process was conducted for each research question.

Quantitative Findings	All quantitative questions have complete findings describing the following: --type of statistical analysis, --related hypotheses, --statistics in narrative and appropriate tabular form --concluding statement indicating the rejection or retention of the null hypothesis.	Most quantitative questions have adequate findings describing the following: --type of statistical analysis, --related hypotheses, --statistics in narrative and appropriate tabular form --concluding statement indicating the rejection or retention of the null hypothesis.	One quantitative question lacks findings describing any of the following: --type of statistical analysis, --related hypotheses, --statistics in narrative and appropriate tabular form --concluding statement indicating the rejection or retention of the null hypothesis.	Two or more quantitative questions lack findings describing any of the following: --type of statistical analysis, --related hypotheses, --statistics in narrative and appropriate tabular form --concluding statement indicating the rejection or retention of the null hypothesis.	No findings for quantitative questions are provided
Qualitative Findings (Case Study points=2X)	All qualitative questions have complete findings describing the following: -- explanation of how the analysis was conducted and the coding was used to arrive at a set of themes --findings as thematic results and (if relevant) descriptive statistics --results presented without implication, speculation, and evaluation.	Most qualitative questions have adequate findings describing the following: --explanation of how the analysis was conducted and the coding was used to arrive at a set of themes --findings as thematic results and (if relevant) descriptive statistics --results presented without implication, speculation, and evaluation.	One qualitative question lacks findings describing any of the following: --explanation of how the analysis was conducted and the coding was used to arrive at a set of themes --findings as thematic results and (if relevant) descriptive statistics --results presented without implication, speculation, and evaluation.	Two or more qualitative questions lack findings describing any of the following: --explanation of how the analysis was conducted and the coding was used to arrive at a set of themes --findings as thematic results and (if relevant) descriptive statistics --results presented without implication, speculation, and evaluation.	No findings for qualitative questions are provided.

Chapter V: Summary, Conclusions, Implications, and Recommendations

20% Dissertation

Quantitative Discussion	All quantitative questions have a complete discussion showing how the findings -- are compared, contrasted and/or synthesized in context to prior research on the topic --relate how the study is aligned to and/or advances the research on the topic --are bounded by the research study design described in Chapters 1, 2 and 3. --are supported by the data and theory and directly answer the research questions.	Most quantitative questions have adequate discussions showing how the findings -- are compared, contrasted and/or synthesized in context to prior research on the topic --relate how the study is aligned to and/or advances the research on the topic --are bounded by the research study design described in Chapters 1, 2 and 3. --are supported by the data and theory and directly answer the research questions.	One quantitative question lacks discussions on how findings --are compared, contrasted and/or synthesized in context to prior research on the topic --relate how the study is aligned to and/or advances the research on the topic --are bounded by the research study design described in Chapters 1, 2 and 3. --are supported by the data and theory and directly answer the research questions.	Two or more quantitative questions lack discussions on how findings -- are compared, contrasted and/or synthesized in context to prior research on the topic --relate how the study is aligned to and/or advances the research on the topic --are bounded by the research study design described in Chapters 1, 2 and 3. --are supported by the data and theory and directly answer the research questions.	No discussion of quantitative findings
Qualitative Discussion	All qualitative questions have complete findings that -- are compared, contrasted and/or synthesized in context to prior research on the topic --relate how the study is	Most qualitative questions have adequate findings that -- are compared, contrasted and/or synthesized in context to prior research on the topic --relate how the study is	One qualitative question lacks discussions on how findings -- are compared, contrasted and/or synthesized in context to prior research on the topic --relate how the study is	Two or more qualitative questions lack discussions on how findings -- are compared, contrasted and/or synthesized in context to prior research on the topic --relate how the study is	No discussion of qualitative findings

	aligned to and/or advances the research on the topic --are bounded by the research study design described in Chapters 1, 2 and 3. --are supported by the data and theory and directly answer the research questions	aligned to and/or advances the research on the topic --are bounded by the research study design described in Chapters 1, 2 and 3. --are supported by the data and theory and directly answer the research questions.	aligned to and/or advances the research on the topic --are bounded by the research study design described in Chapters 1, 2 and 3. --are supported by the data and theory and directly answer the research questions.	aligned to and/or advances the research on the topic --are bounded by the research study design described in Chapters 1, 2 and 3. --are supported by the data and theory and directly answer the research questions.	
Quantitative and Qualitative Conclusions	All quantitative questions have complete conclusions that -- are significant and impact the understanding of the problem(s) and purpose of the study --are stated as major generalizations and answer the research problem --reflect personal opinion as long as it is backed with the data, grounded in the study results presented in Chapter IV --are synthesized and supported within the existing research literature presented in Chapter II.	Most quantitative questions have adequate conclusions that -- are significant and impact the understanding of the problem(s) and purpose of the study --are stated as major generalizations and answer the research problem --reflect personal opinion as long as it is backed with the data, grounded in the study results presented in Chapter IV --are synthesized and supported within the existing research literature presented in Chapter II.	One quantitative question lacks conclusions that -- are significant and impact the understanding of the problem(s) and purpose of the study --are stated as major generalizations and answer the research problem --reflect personal opinion as long as it is backed with the data, grounded in the study results presented in Chapter IV --are synthesized and supported within the existing research literature presented in Chapter II.	Two or more quantitative questions lack conclusions that -- are significant and impact the understanding of the problem(s) and purpose of the study --are stated as major generalizations and answer the research problem --reflect personal opinion as long as it is backed with the data, grounded in the study results presented in Chapter IV --are synthesized and supported within the existing research literature presented in Chapter II.	No conclusions for quantitative findings

	--are supported with references on the theoretical basis.	--are supported with references on the theoretical basis.	--are supported with references on the theoretical basis.	--are supported with references on the theoretical basis.	
Implications and Recommendations	All implications and recommendations are stated as new insights and real-world applications of the study's findings. At least one implication is stated for each of the following types. --Theoretical implications as interpretations of the findings in terms of the examination of the theory/theoretical framework presented in Chapter 2. --Practical implications as statements describing the applications of new insights derived from the study to professional practice and issues. --Future recommendations as future research statements based on what the study did find or do, or what the study did <i>not</i> find or do.	Most implications and recommendations are stated as new insights and real-world applications of the study's findings. At least one implication is stated for each of the following types. --Theoretical implications as interpretations of the findings in terms of the examination of the theory/theoretical framework presented in Chapter 2. --Practical implications as statements describing the applications of new insights derived from the study to professional practice and issues. --Future recommendations as future research statements based on what the study did find or do, or what the study did <i>not</i> find or do.	Some implications and recommendations are stated as new insights and real-world applications of the study's findings. Implications do not address all of the following types. --Theoretical implications as interpretations of the findings in terms of the examination of the theory/theoretical framework presented in Chapter 2. --Practical implications as statements describing the applications of new insights derived from the study to professional practice and issues. --Future recommendations as future research statements based on what the study did find or do, or what the study did <i>not</i> find or do.	Few implications and recommendations are stated as new insights and real-world applications of the study's findings. Implications do not address all of the following types. --Theoretical implications as interpretations of the findings in terms of the examination of the theory/theoretical framework presented in Chapter 2. --Practical implications as statements describing the applications of new insights derived from the study to professional practice and issues. --Future recommendations as future research statements based on what the study did find or do, or what the study did <i>not</i> find or do.	No implications and recommendations are stated.

APA Guidelines 15% Proposal and 10% Dissertation					
APA References Citations	No errors in APA style including, font, spacing, punctuation, capitalization, and format for all in-text citations and references	Few errors in APA style including, font, spacing, punctuation, capitalization, and format for all in-text citations and references	Some errors in APA style including, font, spacing, punctuation, capitalization, and format for all in-text citations and references	Many errors in APA style including, font, spacing, punctuation, capitalization, and format for all in-text citations and references	Disregard for APA format
General APA	No errors in APA style including, font, spacing, punctuation, capitalization, and format for front/back matter	Few errors in APA style including, font, spacing, punctuation, capitalization, and format for front/back matter	Some errors in APA style including, font, spacing, punctuation, capitalization, and format for front /back matter	Many errors in APA style including, font, spacing, punctuation, capitalization, and format for front/back matter	Disregard for APA format
Grammar, Usage, Mechanics, and Organization 15% Proposal and 10% Dissertation					
Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics	No grammar, usage, punctuation, and/or spelling errors	Few grammar, usage, punctuation, and/or spelling errors	Some grammar, usage, punctuation, and/or spelling errors	Many grammar, usage, punctuation, and/or spelling errors	Disregard for grammar, usage, punctuation, and/or spelling
Scholarly Style and Organization	Scholarly style is evident exceptionally organized with logical flow, correct paragraph and sentence structure, appropriate transitions, and formal word choice -Has the required number of scholarly references as	Scholarly style is adequate with few errors in logical flow, paragraphing, appropriate transitions, and word choice -Has the required number of scholarly references as designated in proposal or	Scholarly style is inconsistent with some errors in logical flow, paragraphing, appropriate transitions, and formal word choice. Does not have the required number of scholarly references	Scholarly style is lacking with many errors in logical flow, paragraphing, appropriate transitions, and formal word choice. Does not have the required number of scholarly references as	No scholarly style is evident.

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